SEVEN SERMONS,

VIZ.

I. Of the Unpardonable Sin against the HOLY GHOST; Or, The Sin unto Death.

II. The Saint's Duty and Exercise: In Two Parts. Being an Exhortation to, and Direction for Prayer.

III. The Accepted Time and Day of Salvation.

IV. The End of Time, and Beginning of Eternity.

V. *Joshua*'s Resolution to serve the Lord.

VI. The Way to Heaven made Plain.

VII. The future State of Man: Or, A Treatise of the Resurrection.

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Preface to the *Reader.*

THE Reaſon of publiſhing this Treatiſe, is, becauſe ſome People have deſired Satisfaction from me, what the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt *is: But I could not make a full Deſcription of it in ſhort; therefore it came into my Mind to enlarge upon it in a ſmall Book, wherein they may receive full Satisfaction about it. And this I have done, not from the Opinion of others, but from the true and written Word of God. This Sin can be committed but by few, and yet ſometimes it ſteals into the Hearts of them that commit it, when they diſcern it not: But the Lord of his Mercy keeps us all, both from that Sin, and alſo from the Reign and Dominion of every Sin: which that he may do, is the Prayer of,*

Your Friend,

R. RUSSEL.

A TABLE of ſeveral TEXT Diſcourſed upon.

THERE is a Sin unto Death 1 *John* v. *part of verſe the* 1
Pray without ceaſing, 1 *Theſſ.* v. 1
—Behold now is the accepted Time behold! now is the Day of Salvation, 2 *Cor.* vi. *part of verſe* 6.
And the Angel which I ſaw ſtanding upon the ſea, and upon the earth lift up his hand to heaven: and ſware by Him that liveth for ever and ever, &c. that there ſhould be time no longer. *Rev.* x. *and part of verſe* 6.
But as for me and my houſe, we will ſerve the Lord, *Joſh.* xxiv. *part of verſe* 15.
Good maſter, what good thing ſhall I do that I may have eternal life? *Matt.* xix. 16.
Marvel not at this, the Hour is coming, in the which all that are in the grave ſhall hear his voice and ſhall come forth, they that have done good unto the reſurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the reſurrection of damnation. *John* v. 28, 29.

Of the Unpardonable SIN

AGAINST THE

HOLY GHOST;

OR,

The SIN unto DEATH.

John v. part of verſe 16. *There is a ſin unto Death.*

THIS ſin, which St. *John* calls here *The ſin unto Death*, is the unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, deſcribed by our bleſſed Saviour, Matt. xii. 32. That whoſoever commits it hath no forgiveneſs, neither in this world, nor in the world to come. Or, *All manner of ſin and blaſphemy ſhall be forgiven unto men, but the blaſphemy of the Holy Ghoſt ſhall not be forgiven unto men. And he that ſpeaketh a word againſt the Son it ſhall be forgiven him; but whoſoever ſpeaks againſt the Holy Ghoſt, ſhall never be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come.* This ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt is that ſin which St. John calls here *the ſin unto Death*. Not becauſe that ſin deſerves death alone, for ſo does all ſin deſerve death, both temporal and eternal, for the wages of ſin, even all ſin is death, *Rom.* vi. 23. But this ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt is called *The ſin unto Death*, becauſe it leads a man over to eternal death without a poſſibility of recovery. Now ſome there are, that go from one degree of ſin to another, they height-

en and aggravate their ſins more and more, until they are brought to that height at laſt, as to commit that ſin for which there is no forgiveneſs.

There is no mere man ſince the fall that can live without ſin, for all are ſinners, but yet there are degrees of ſin; ſome ſins in their own nature are ſmall, others are more great and heinous. Many ſins there are that are great, yet pardonable, and one ſin there is unpardonable; and whoſoever commits that one ſin ſhall have no forgiveneſs, but muſt ever bear the weight and puniſhment both of that and of all his other ſins. There is ſuch a ſin as St *John* ſpeaks of here in my text, that is *a ſin unto death*. And now I come to the explication of the word, from whence I ſhall raiſe this point of Doctrine.

Doct.) *That amongſt other ſins committed by fallen mankind, there is only one ſin, that is a* ſin unto death *and whoſoever committeth that, he hath no forgiveneſs neither in this world, nor in the world to come.*

Now for my further proceeding on this ſubject I ſhall lay open to you.

Firſt, What *the ſin unto death* is.

Secondly, That all other ſins, how great and heinous ſoever, may be forgiven.

Thirdly, That this ſin alone ſhall never be forgiven.

Fourthly, The reaſon why this ſin alone is unpardonable. And then,

Laſtly, I ſhall conclude all with a few words of application.

I ſhall begin firſt with the deſcription of this unpardonable ſin; where I ſhall endeavour to make as plain a deſcription of it as poſſibly I can; and in doing of it, I ſhall, 1. Shew you negatively what is not this ſin, 2. I ſhall ſhew you poſitively what it is.

I. I ſhall ſhew you negatively, what is not the

ſin unto death; or in what degree a man may ſin, and yet not commit that unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt.

1. It is not every quenching of the motions of the ſpirit, that is this ſin. It is true, when the Holy Ghoſt comes with a ſtill voice, and knocks at the door of ſinners for entrance, he often comes and ſtrives with them, and ſecretly, woes and beſeeches them to leave their ſins and be converted; yet they quench and ſtifle all his motions, and bear up their hearts againſt him, and will not be obedient to his heavenly calls; now ſuch ſin grieveouſly againſt the Holy Ghoſt: but yet this alone is not the unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt; for many that have ſtood it out a long time, and have often quenched and grieved the holy ſpirit, yet at laſt they have been wrought upon unto ſincere converſion.

2. A man may commit many heinous and crying ſins, and yet be not guilty of the unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt. A man may be an idolater, a whoremonger, a fornicator, a murtherer, and work witchcraft, and ſin with a very high hand; nay, he may live in all manner of filthineſs and lewdneſs, and yet not be under the guilt of the unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt. Thus we read 2 *Chron.* xxxiii. that *Manaſſah* ſinned with a very high hand; he was an idolater, and inchanter, and worked witchcraft, and dealt with familiar ſpirits, and wrought much evil in the ſight of the Lord. And *Mary Magdalen* had ſeven devils caſt out of her, *Luke* viii. and yet both were pardoned.

3. A man may ſin [illegible] ſumptuouſly againſt great light and knowledge, and yet not commit this ſin unto death. For *Peter*, when he denied Chriſt, did ſin againſt great knowledge; Chriſt he knew Chriſt to be his Lord and Saviour, he was one of Chriſt's beloved diſciples, and for all that, how ſtrongly he denied

denied Chriſt, and with an Oath; and yet for all that, Chriſt looked upon him with a merciful eye, and he repented and was forgiven.

4. It is not every malicious ſin that is the unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt; for St *Paul* certainly had great malice in his heart, when he went on ſo furiouſly to perſecute the church of God, and yet he was converted, and became a preacher of the goſpel of Chriſt, which before he perſecuted.

5. And *Laſtly*, it is not final unbelief, nor final impenitence, that is the unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, tho' ſome be of opinion that it is, becauſe that ſin is unpardonable, and Chriſt himſelf hath ſaid, *Matt.* xix. 13. *That all manner of ſin and Blaſphemy ſhall be forgiven unto man, except it be the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt.* But you are to take the words of our Saviour in their true ſenſe and meaning; it is all manner of ſin and blaſphemy committed within the compaſs of a man's life that ſhall be forgiven, except the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt; for the ſin of final impenitence and final unbelief, is not compleated until the very moment of a man's death; and then you all know, that there is no repentance, and conſequently no pardon after death, for Chriſt ſaid, *He that ſins againſt the Holy Ghoſt, hath no forgiveneſs, neither in this world, nor in the world to come.* Now, why ſhould Chriſt ſay *in this world*, if there be no ſpace to be forgiven in this world? but a man may commit the unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, many years before his death. Beſides, there are many thouſands that die in impenitence and unbelief, and are damned, and yet never committed the unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt.

Thus have I ſhewed you negatively, what is not this unpardonable ſin, none of thoſe ſins in particular is that ſin.

II. I come now to ſhew you poſitively, what this

this ſin unto death is, and wherein this unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt doth conſiſt. Now there are ſeveral opinions in the world about it, but I will endeavour, through God's help, to lead you to the plain ſight of it by the light of the holy ſcripture.

Now, in the firſt place, you muſt know, that there are two ſorts of people that cannot commit this unpardonable ſin.

The true believers cannot commit it, becauſe it is a ſin againſt great light and knowledge. Indeed the greateſt part of the world ſhall be damned: yet among the greateſt part there are but few of them that can commit that unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt.

Some have both light and grace, theſe ſhall not commit the unpardonable ſin. Again, ſome have neither light nor grace, theſe cannot commit that unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt. Now there muſt be two ingredients to make up this unpardonable ſin; that is, light in the head, and malice in the heart; without theſe two, the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt cannot be committed: for to ſin againſt great light and knowledge, is no that ſin; nor yet to ſin ignorantly without malice, is that ſin; but they muſt both join together, to make up this unpardonable ſin. This we ſee plainly, by the example of St. *Peter* and St. *Paul*; *Peter* denied Chriſt, and forſwore himſelf too, and that grievouſly, againſt light, and knowledge; for he knew Chriſt to be the only begotten ſon of God, and he knew God in him, he was one of Chriſt's diſciples, and one of his beloved diſciples too; he was taught of Chriſt and had experimental knowledge of his love and favour, and yet he wickedly with an oath denied him. Now if *Peter* had done this out of malice and ſpite, then he had committed that *ſin unto death*, for which there is no

forgiveneſs; but *Peter* had no malice in his heart all this while, even at that time when he denied Chriſt, as you may ſee in *Matt.* xxvi. 34, 35. When Chriſt told him, before the cock crow thou ſhalt deny me thrice; *he anſwered*, if I ſhould die with thee, I will not deny thee, and then denying him through infirmity and weakneſs of the fleſh, when he had conſidered what he had done, he went out and wept bitterly, *verſe* 75. But *Paul* had great malice and ſpite againſt the ways and people of God, as you may ſee, *Acts* ix. 1. *Paul* breathed out threatenings and ſlaughter againſt the diſciples of the Lord, and went to the high prieſt, deſiring of him letters to *Damaſcus*, to the ſynagogues, that if he found any in this way, whether men or women, he ſhould bring them bound to *Jeruſalem*. Now here was great rage and malice in *Saul*, againſt the ways and the people of God: but doing it ignorantly he at laſt heard a voice ſaying, *Saul, Saul, Why perſecuteſt thou me?* and ſeeing a light from heaven, and hearing that it was Jeſus that he perſecuted, he was pricked at the heart, and trembling and aſtoniſhed, ſaid, *Lord, what wilt thou have me do?* Now by theſe two places of ſcripture, you may plainly ſee that *Peter* ſinned againſt great light, and *Paul* out of great malice, yet neither of them committed the unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt. But whenſoever light and malice meet together in one man, then there is the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt. Now as all other ſins, ſo is this ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt——

1. In thought; that is, when a wicked man, againſt his clear light and knowledge, doth but conceive a malicious thought or purpoſe towards perſecuting the goſpel of Chriſt, or of the ſaints of Chriſt, to hinder the work of the Holy Ghoſt in them.

This ſin, as is to be thought, was the ſin of the loſt angels, for which cauſe they were loſt without all hopes of pardon. Now ſome diſpute, whether this ſin was a ſin of the thought, but I ſay in all likelihood it was; for the angels being only ſpirits, without bodies, and ſo having no uſe of bodily tongues, it could not be committed in word nor yet could they commit it in action, becauſe they were caſt out of heaven, before they could bring it into practice; therefore it muſt be a ſin of the thought.

Now this ſin was this; their habitation being in the higheſt heavens, and under God himſelf, they had exceeding great light and knowledge; they had more knowledge than all the men in the world ever had, and were happy above all other creatures: But when not being contented with this eſtate, they thought to be as high as God himſelf, therefore they maliciouſly ſought to make war againſt the ſon of God, and put him out of his throne: for which cauſe they were immediately thruſt out of heaven, never more to ſee the face of mercy; and thus from the beginning they have been counted malicious and revengeful, as raging beaſts, and roaring lions; thus their ſin being of the ſame nature with the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, they were excluded all hopes of pardon.

But that the ſin of our firſt parents was not the unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt is clear; for tho' they ſinned againſt great light, yet they obeyed, and complied with the will of God, even when the tempter came, until at laſt they were enticed and overcome; but they did not fall maliciouſly, and ſo were not excluded all poſſibility of mercy.

2. This ſin may be committed in word too; that is when a man ſpeaketh blaſphemouſly and maliciouſly of Chriſt and his holy ways. This was the ſin of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, Mark iii. 22. *There*

were certain ſcribes came and ſaid, this fellow hath Belzebub, *and caſteth out devils by the prince of devils.* Therefore ſaith Chriſt unto them, ver. 28, 29. *Verily I ſay unto you, all ſins ſhall be forgiven to the ſons of men, and blaſphemy wherewith ſoever they ſhall blaſpheme: But whomſoever ſhall blaſpheme againſt the Holy Ghoſt, hath never forgiveneſs, but is in danger of eternal Damnation.*

Now the reaſon of this ſpeech of our bleſſed Saviour is ſhewn in verſe 30, becauſe they ſaid, *he hath an unclean ſpirit*; which plainly ſhews that theſe ſcribes had ſpoken blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt: As theſe ſcribes were great learned men, they could know no other but that Chriſt was the ſon of God, and muſt know that he caſt out devils by the ſpirit of God, and yet they, out of ſpite to Chriſt, maliciouſly and blaſphemouſly ſaid, *That he caſt out devils by* Belzebub *the chief of devils.* Thus the ſcribes committed the unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, and that in word.

3. This ſin may be committed in action too; that is, when a man being once thoroughly enlightened, having entered upon a holy courſe of life, and taſted the comforts of God's ſpirit, and ſome foretaſte of the joys of heaven, and not only makes profeſſion of the goſpel, but teaches it to others; yet at laſt takes a diſlike to the holy courſes; and through ſpite and malice, utterly forſakes, oppoſes, and perſecutes thoſe good ways of God, which he before profeſſed and taught. But to ſum up this point, this unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt is fully deſcribed by the apoſtle to the *Hebrews*, chap. x. 26, 27, 29. *For if we ſin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more ſacrifice for ſin, but a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which ſhall devour the adverſaries. Of how much ſorer puniſhment ſhall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the ſon of God, and counted the*

blood of the covenant, wherewith he was ſanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done deſpite to the ſpirit of grace? Likewiſe, *Heb.* vi. 4, 5, 6. *For it is impoſſible for thoſe who are made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt, and have taſted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they fall away, to renew them again unto repentance, ſeeing they crucify to themſelves afreſh the ſon of God, and put him to open ſhame.*

I ſhall a little explain theſe words, and then proceed,

1. This ſin unto death is an oppoſing ſin; now to oppoſe a thing, is to contradict it, or gainſay; as when a man ſays a thing is ſo and ſo, he denies it, and ſays it is not ſo; or when a man ſays a thing muſt be done, he ſays again it muſt not, or it ſhall not be done; ſuch an oppoſition is in the heart of him that commits this unpardonable ſin; but a man may be an oppoſing man, and yet not commit this ſin: Therefore,

2. It is the truth he muſt oppoſe; that is, he muſt utterly oppoſe and reject Chriſt, who ſaid, *I am the truth*, John xiv. 9. He oppoſeth all his threatenings, and will not believe his promiſes, and counts the blood of the covenant to be an unholy thing: Nay, he alſo oppoſeth the ſpirit of Chriſt, who is the ſpirit of truth. So that he will not obey his motions, and will not be led or guided by him; but a man may oppoſe the truth, and do it ignorantly: Therefore,

3. It muſt be the known truth that he oppoſeth; he muſt be once enlightened: But you muſt know, that it is not only a rational knowledge, and human learning, for he may know much of God, and of his will, in the letter of the word, and yet not be capable of committing this unpardonable ſin: But he muſt be ſo far enlightend as to ſee the evil that is in ſin, and the excellency of Chriſt,

Chriſt, he muſt taſte of the heavenly gift, and be made partaker of the Holy Ghoſt; and taſte of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come; and by the blood of the covenant, which he counts as an unholy thing, he is in part ſanctified and cleanſed from many ſins; he muſt have ſweet communion with God in his word and ſacraments; he muſt have ſome taſte of the love and favour of God, and comforts of his ſpirit, and be refreſhed by it, and taſte of the joys of heaven, and have ſome foretaſte of the happineſs of the world to come.

This is that light of knowledge that lays a man open to the committing of that unpardonable ſin: But yet a man may ſin againſt all his light and experimental knowledge, and yet do it thro' the weakneſs of the fleſh, or thro' ſome violent temptations, as *Peter* did when he denied Chriſt: Therefore:

4. He muſt oppoſe the known truth wilfully; he muſt wilfully fall away, after he hath received the knowledge of the truth; other ſins are committed thro' infirmity, but this ſin is wilful, the will is the chief actor in it; and to compleat and make up this unpardonable ſin, there is,

5. Malice in the heart; without this, this ſin cannot be committed; it muſt be a malicious oppoſing of the known truth; that is, when a man being once enlightened, and having taſted of the heavenly gift, and the good word of God, and hath been made partaker of the Holy Ghoſt, and hath had ſome ſweet reliſh and foretaſte of heaven, he comes to take a diſlike, and to hate the holy ways of God, and maliciouſly oppoſe and perſecute them, in deſpite to the ſpirit of grace, crucifying afreſh the ſon of God, and putting him to open ſhame.

Now a man having gone thus far, he comes in the laſt place to be an apoſtate; for thus to oppoſe wilfully and maliciouſly the known truth, is alway

joined with final and total apoſtacy: for he that is ſo far enlightened as to ſee the evil of ſin, and the excellency of Chriſt and holineſs, and hath been made partaker of the Holy Ghoſt, of his graces and comforts, and taſted of God's love and favour in Jeſus Chriſt, and has ſome foretaſte of the joys of the world to come: for ſuch an one wilfully, ſpitefully, and maliciouſly to fall away, he ſo falls as never to riſe more. 'Tis true, the children of God fall, and that often, and riſe again; but then they fall through weakneſs or infirmity, and not wilfully or maliciouſly; but theſe wicked wretches fall wilfully & maliciouſly, & ſo fall finally. Againſt ſuch, the door of mercy is ever ſhut; concerning ſuch, St. *Peter* ſaid, *It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteouſneſs than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them: but it happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is returned unto his own vomit again, and the ſow that was waſhed, to her wallowing in the mire*, 2. Pet. ii. 21, 22. There is a dreadful place in ſcripture againſt theſe kind of apoſtates, that is, Heb. x. 26. *For if we ſin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth; there remaineth no ſacrifice for ſin, but a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation.* Thus have I given you five ſteps as ſo many links in a chain, all which make up the unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt. It is a wilful and malicious oppoſing of the known truth, joined with final apoſtacy. Thus have I ſhewed you, as plain as I can, what this ſin unto death is.

Secondly, The next thing to be conſidered is, that all other ſins or blaſphemies whatſoever may be forgiven; be our ſins never ſo great and many, tho' he be the vileſt wretch that ever lived, yet there is hopes of pardon upon repentance. *Manaſſeh* was the vileſt wretch that we ever read of, yet

yet he repented and was pardoned: Alſo *Mary Magdalen* was the chief of ſinners, for out of her came ſeven devils, yet, becauſe ſhe loved much, much was forgiven her. A man may be a whoremonger and adulterer, and work witchcraft, and deal with familiar ſpirits, and yet at laſt he may repent and be ſaved; and yet I have heard talk of ſome that are ſo fooliſh as to take the ſin of fornication for an unpardonable ſin, from God's own words in the fourth commandment. *I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, viſiting the ſins of the fathers, unto the third and fourth generation:* From whence they ſay, that children that are baſe born, are not ſaved, unto the third and fourth generation; but this is a moſt erroneous interpretation of God's word; it is thoſe that hate him, and continue hating of him, that he will inflict their iniquities upon. For fornicators and adulterers themſelves may repent and be ſaved; much more the children who know nothing, nor could help nothing; for Chriſt with his own mouth tells the ſcribes and phariſees, Matt. xxi. 31. *That the publicans and harlots ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven before them; for there is no ſin but what is pardonable, except the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt.* But,

Thirdly, This ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, is alone the ſin unto death; that is, a ſin unpardonable, never to be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come: Not becauſe the merits of Chriſt are not ſufficient to pardon it, for this ſin, as well as all other ſins, are but finite, whereas the merits of Chriſt are infinite.

Object. *What is the reaſon then that this ſin cannot be forgiven?*

Anſ. This queſtion brings me to the fourth thing conſiderable; do but mind me a little and I will, as plain and as clear as I can, tell you what the reaſon is.

This

This ſin is called the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, not becauſe it is a ſin againſt the perſon of the Holy Ghoſt, for ſo is all ſin againſt his perſon; but it is called the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, becauſe it is againſt the work and office of the Holy Ghoſt. Now every one of the three perſons have their particular work. The work of the Father is to create, the work of the Son is to redeem loſt ſinners, and the work of the Holy Ghoſt is to enlighten, convince, ſanctify, and convert them. Now a man committing this unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, rejects all this work of the ſpirit. Now for a man to be ſo thoroughly enlightened by the Holy Ghoſt, that he comes to know the evil of ſin, and his loſt and undone condition without Chriſt, and that none but the merits of Chriſt can ſave him; and notwithſtanding wilfully and maliciouſly oppoſes him, and the work of his ſpirit, and refuſes to be beholden to him for ſalvation; now for ſuch a one, I ſay, to be forgiven, is utterly impoſſible.

Object. *But why is it impoſſible? Nothing is impoſſible with God.*

Anſ. Nothing is impoſſible with God that does not imply a contradiction: But that God will forgive the ſin committed againſt the Holy Ghoſt implies a contradiction: For how can he have pardon given him that utterly rejects it? As for inſtance—

A man thro' ignorance may deny Chriſt, (nay, maliciouſly fall from the profeſſion of the truth into all kind of wickedneſs, as did St. *Paul*, & the *Jews* that crucified Chriſt) yet not falling againſt light and knowledge, there is room for the Holy Ghoſt to work upon him, to enlighten him, and to convince him of his folly, and ſo make way for converſion. But for a man, when he is once enlightened by the Holy Ghoſt, and has had ſome taſte of God's love and favour, and ſome foretaſte of the joys of heaven, and then at laſt, utterly oppoſing

this illuminating work of the ſpirit, wilfully and maliciouſly to fall away, and ſo to reject the ſpirits' renewing work; alas! then the Holy Ghoſt is done, he has nothing more then that he can work in him, for this wretched creature has utterly rejected him, his enlightening work, his convincing work, his ſanctifying work; he has utterly rejected Chriſt's pardon, heaven and all. Now this poor wretch is paſt all hopes of mercy, all hopes of pardon: nay for ſuch a one we are forbidden to pray; as you ſee in the verſe, whereof my text is a part. Now Chriſt prayed for them that maliciouſly crucified him, *Luke* xxiii. 34. ſaying, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* Alas! they knew not what they were doing, *for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory*, 1 Cor. ii. 8. But if they had known, and yet crucified him, Chriſt would not have ſpent his breath to pray for them; for it would have been utterly in vain. For when a man has committed this unpardonable ſin, neither the praying in heaven nor earth can do him any good; for as the text ſaith, *There is a ſin unto Death.*

I ſhall conclude with a few words of application; and I will be as ſhort as poſſible, leſt this diſcourſe ſhould be too large for ſo ſmall a book: Here is:

Firſt, A word of comfort.

Secondly, A word of counſel.

Firſt, A word of comfort. It may be that by hearing and reading of this terrible diſcourſe your hearts begin to ach for fear that you have committed this unpardonable ſin: But I think I have ſufficiently proved to you what it is: and I tell you again, that there are but few that can commit it; nay, there are millions that are tormented in hell, yet never committed this ſin: nay, farther, an ignorant proteſtant may through weakneſs, and out of a ſlaviſh fear, turn papiſt, and renounce his profeſſion, and yet not commit this unpardonable ſin againſt

the Holy Ghoſt: For doing it out of ignorace and infirmity, there may be matter left for the Holy Ghoſt to work upon, whereby he may yet be converted and ſaved. Conſider this alſo, if you are afraid you have committed it, and wiſh that you had not committed it, and would not commit it, if it were to do again, then that is a true ſign you have not committed it.

Secondly, I muſt conclude all with a word of counſel.

I. Watch very diligently againſt all ſin: But above all, take ſpecial heed of theſe ſins that come near to the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt; & they are theſe; Hypocriſy, taking only the outward profeſſion of religion, and ſo diſſembling and mocking of God; ſinning wilfully againſt conviction of conſcience, and againſt great light and knowledge, ſinning preſumptuouſly, (with an high hand:) Theſe ſins, tho' none of them are the direct ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, yet they will come very near to it; therefore take ſpecial heed of them, leſt they in time ſhould bring you to the committing of that unpardonable ſin. And,

II. Labour to be ſincere in religion, and by a true faith engraft yourſelves in Chriſt, for they that be in Chriſt, can never commit this unpardonable ſin: For know this, that among all the ſins committed by fallen mankind, there is one ſin that is a *ſin unto Death*, which is the unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, which whoſoever commits hath no forgiveneſs, neither in this world, nor in the world to come.

Conſider what hath been ſaid, and the Lord give you underſtanding.

The End of the Firſt SERMON.

THE

Saint's Duty and Exercise:

Or, an Earnest

Invitation to the Throne of GRACE.

The First PART

THESS. V. 17. *Pray without ceasing.*

TO the glory of God and the good of souls, there is no subject more necessary for me to write upon, than that to stir people to the duty of prayer, both in their families and in secret. I find it a duty most sadly neglected, not only among the profane sort of people indeed (who seldom or never pray in their families, therefore it is to be feared much less do they pray in secret) but I have been among such as seem to be the best of people, that are just and righteous in their dealings towards others, that delight to hear the best preachers, and join with the best assemblies, and are very kind and courteous towards others, and yet they neglect prayer in their families. Some of them I know do pray in their families on evenings before they go to bed. But as for those who make conscience of performing the duty of prayer in their families, both morning and evening, they are so few, that there are but here and there one to be found of them. This is a case very much bewailed and lamented. Nay, in this one duty I have just cause to condemn myself; for I may write

write with ſhame enough, that this duty of prayer has been too much neglected by me as well as by others: Nay, to this day, I find ſo much averſeneſs and backwardneſs to this duty; ſo much ſlothfulneſs, deadneſs, dulneſs of ſpirit, and ſometimes one luſt, or one vanity or other ſteals into my heart, which makes me think myſelf to be unfit for this duty of prayer, and I find it ſometimes very hard to paſs over all difficulties, and perform the duty of prayer aright. This makes me the more pity others, looking upon others to be in the ſame condition with myſelf. But conſider, friends, this is the work of the devil, who does what he can either to keep us from prayer, or elſe to diſturb us in prayer. So it was with the children of God, *Job* i. The ſons of God came there and preſented themſelves unto the Lord. But what to do? I anſwer, it was to pray and make ſupplication unto the Lord. Then it is ſaid that Satan came among them: But what did he come among them for? I anſwer, it was, if he could, to keep them from their duty, or elſe diſturb them in their duty, by filling them either with wandering or diſtracted thoughts, thereby to cauſe them to loſe the benefit of the duty. Alas! friends, faithful prayer is that which the Devil cannot endure; for there is no weapon more powerful for the weakening Satan's kingdom, and ſetting up the kingdom of Chriſt in the ſouls of ſinners, than prayer is.

The devil is content that we ſhould read, and come to church, and hear ſermons, without much diſturbance, becauſe he thinks he may eaſily keep us from profiting by the word; but he labors with all his might to keep us from prayer and meditation, becauſe he knows that theſe duties weaken his kingdom. But, my friends, let not you and I yield ourſelves up to Satan's temptations, but reſiſt him and ſtir up ourſelves to take hold on God,

and call upon his name, by conſtant and fervent prayer.

Certainly if the wickedneſs of the *Sodomites* grieved and vexed the ſoul of righteous *Lot*, it would grieve him much more if he were amongſt us in this degenerate age, and ſaw how wickedneſs abounds in this world: How God is by one judgment or another frowning upon us for our ungodly doings; how that the end of all things is near at hand, and yet how many prayerleſs perſons and families there are amongſt us; how many multitudes of people can riſe in the morning, and go about their concerns in the world, and then to bed again at night, and never regard to pray in their families, but live as if they had not a God to ſeek; as if they had not an everlaſting ſtate to prepare for: Friends let me deſire you to conſider theſe few things.

Firſt, Conſider that your neglect of prayer is a ſign that you are none of God's children, but you are yet in your unregenerated and unconverted ſtate and condition, and it were better that you had never been born, than you ſhould die in ſuch a condition. O conſider that your breath is in the hands of God, and he may ſtop it whenſoever he pleaſeth; you can not aſſure yourſelves of an hour to live; and is it not then a dangerous thing to live in the neglect of prayer? O friends! how dare you go forth in the morning without prayer, leſt Death ſhould meet you before night and caſt you into hell; or, how dare you at night lie down in your beds, before you have been at the throne of grace, and pleaded there with the Lord by prayer, for grace, pardon, and mercy, leſt you ſhould awake before morning in the flames of hell: O do but conſider now and then upon this, how exceedingly dangerous it is to live in the neglect of prayer. But if you have the ſpirit of prayer, if you give yourſelves up to conſtant fervent prayer, this is a ſign of your new birth, and whenſoever

whenſoever death comes, you are ſafe. You know, that a child, as ſoon as he is born, cries; ſo a ſinner, as ſoon as he is born again, falls a crying unto God, at it was ſaid of *Paul*, as ſoon as he is born again, *Behold he prayeth.* Acts ix. 11. It is the ſpirit of adoption that makes us cry, *Abba Father.*

Secondly, Conſider the end, thy God requires prayer, and let that encourage you to the duty. God does not require prayer that he may receive from us, for he is infinitely and perfectly happy without us, and therefore needs not our performances. But God being willing to beſtow thoſe good things we need, and to communicate that grace and mercy without which we are miſerable for ever, therefore it pleaſeth God out of his infinite goodneſs, to require prayer, to make us fit for the mercy which he knows we want: Therefore the Lord commands us to pray always, *Luke* xxi. 36. *Pray always, that you may be accounted worthy to eſcape all theſe things, and to ſtand before the Son of man.* See 1 *Tim.* ii. 8. *Rom.* xii. 12. *Phil.* iv. 6. And alſo here in the text, *Pray without ceaſing.*

Thirdly, Conſider while you are ſtrangers to prayer, you are ſlaves to the devil, and he is doing what he can to work out your utter ruin and deſtruction: The devil is ſaid in ſcripture to fill the hearts of the ungodly, to keep poſſeſſion of them, and to work in the children of diſobedience. And truly the Devil finds abundance of prey, for ſome watch not at all, and pray not at all againſt him. And they that pray not, are led captive by Satan at his pleaſure and they do not care or deſire to have his ſnare broken, nor themſelves recovered. Friends, conſider, the more you neglect prayer, the ſtronger your corruptions will grow, and the more ſin will encreaſe in you, and the more fit you will be for utter ruin and deſtruction. But on the other ſide, the oftner you pray, and the more fervently you pray, the more will

will ſin and corruption weaken in you, and more fit you are for grace and mercy: as it is a remarkable ſpeech among Mr. *Dod's* ſayings, *prayer will make a man give over ſinning, or elſe ſin will make a man give over praying.* Or friends, as ever you deſire to be delivered out of the thraldom of the devil, as ever you deſire the ſalvation of your ſouls, as ever you deſire to find grace and mercy at the hand of God, be perſuaded to give yourſelves to earneſt fervent prayer. But,

Fourthly, Conſider, thoſe that are ſtrangers to prayer, the God of Heaven is againſt them. O dreadful! Who are they that can ſtand before his indignation? Who can defend him againſt that arm that is omnipotent? The mountains quake, the Hills melt, and the very devils tremble before this God? ſure it is dreadful to have ſo glorious and great a God an enemy: But an enemy he is to all them who do count his mercy and favour not worth praying for: Thoſe that do not intreat this God to be reconciled, now, whilſt he offers to be reconciled to them, it is a ſign they neither value his love, nor fear his wrath; therefore his wrath they muſt abide, except they in earneſt ſeek unto him.

Fifthly, Conſider, they that are ſtrangers to prayer, and will not cry to God, now in the day of their viſitation, whilſt pardon and mercy may be had, muſt look to be neglected when they are forced to cry, when miſery and diſtreſs cover them. O read and tremble at the place in Prov. i. 26, 27, 28. *I will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh: when your fear cometh as deſolation, and your deſtruction cometh as a whirlwind, when diſtreſs and anguiſh cometh upon you; then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer; they ſhall ſeek me, but they ſhall not find me.* My friends, if you will not ſeek the Lord now whilſt he may be found, if you will not call upon him now whilſt he is near, Iſaiah xi.

You may at last be forced to cry in your extremity, and not be regarded.

Sixthly, Consider that if you live in the neglect of prayer, that quickly the accepted time which you improve not, will be past and gone; and then you shall beg, yea, and beg earnestly, but must certainly be denied. We read in scripture of calls that have not been regarded, the foolish virgins came after the door was shut, and cried *Lord, Lord, open unto us*; but alas! they spoke when it was too late, therefore the reply was, *I know not whence you are*, Matt. xxv. 10, 11, 12, when the rich man in hell begged for a drop of water to cool his tongue, this was not granted, *Luke* xv. to intimate that not the least mercy in hell is to be expected, nor the least mitigation of torments is to be looked for: All then will be ready to pray, Lord, open the door that lets into thy kingdom and glory: Lord, vouchsafe a little respite, a little ease in the midst of our torment. O but then God's ear will be stopped, heaven's gate will be shut, and mercy will be gone for ever. O what a madness is it then towaste our precious time, and not come to the throne of grace before the day of grace comes to an end!

Seventhly and *Lastly*, If you live in the neglect of prayer, your mercies may turn to curses, for that threatning is fulfilled upon them, Mal. ii. 2, *I will send a curse upon you, and curse your blessings.* Prayer will turn curses into blessings; afflictions are part of the curse which are inflicted because of sin: But prayers alter the nature of them, and turns them into mercies and blessings; for the sanctification of them being begged by prayer, and granted, they work together for the good of them: *For* (saith the Apostle) *afflictions yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby.* On the other side, where prayer is not, there blessings are turned into curses, and good things which are re-

ceived work together for the ſhame and ruin of thoſe that enjoy them. Common mercies are made a curſe unto prayerleſs perſons; ſo if they continue in the neglect of prayer, they muſt certainly miſs of thoſe eſpecial ſaving mercies revealed in the goſpel: as pardon of ſin, juſtification by Chriſt, adoption, ſanctification by the ſpirit, deliverance from hell, eternal happineſs in the life to come. And God hath determined and declared in his word, that thoſe that will have theſe things muſt ſeek them: but if they ſeek them not by earneſt fervent prayer, it is a ſign they underſtand not the worth of them, and therefore muſt certainly and juſtly go without them. God is not ſo prodigal of his mercies and favours as to fling them away upon thoſe perſons that do not think them worth praying for. Theſe conſiderations I have given you as an introduction to the matter enſuing, that you may be the more ſtirred up to mind what I have to write; and if you have hitherto neglected prayer, that you would now in good earneſt ſet about it. O you that are ſtrangers to prayer, conſider that you are all this while in a moſt woeful and miſerable condition; for you are in your ſins, ſlaves to the devil, more ſtrangers to God, and under his wrath and curſe, and if you ſhould die in this condition, you are undone for ever. Therefore ſeek unto the Lord by earneſt prayer that you may be delivered out of this condition.

You want a pardon, you want Chriſt and grace, and you are undone if you have not theſe ſoul bleſſings, and you will not ply the throne of grace for obtaining of them: Friends, if you did but ſeriouſly conſider your ſtate and your wants, you would find it neceſſary to obey the words of the Apoſtle here in the text, and *pray without ceaſing*. Now the point of Doctrine which I ſhall raiſe from theſe words is this; that it is both the duty and work of every true chriſtian to *pray without ceaſing*. Now in my further handling

handling this point concerning prayer, I ſhall endeavour 1ſt, to ſhew what prayer is, 2dly, what it is to pray continually, 3dly, to ſhew ſome reaſons why we ought to *pray without ceaſing*, *laſtly*, to make application.

Firſt, What prayer is: in ſhort, prayer is an earneſt and fervent offering up of our deſires to God by him, in the name of Jeſus Chriſt, for thoſe good things that are agreeable to God's will and our own neceſſity, now there muſt concur theſe two things to make up the duty of prayer, 1ſt an earneſt and fervent deſire, a longing deſire after thoſe graces and bleſſings we come to God for, for there are ſome that come frequently to the throne of grace and offer a form of words in a praying way: I ſay a form of words, either compoſed ready to their hands, or elſe of their own compoſing: and ſo they come to God with expreſſions of words, without an hearty deſire after thoſe graces and mercies they ſeem to pray for: but their deſires run out after other things, after their luſt, their covetouſneſs, and the things of this world: and yet they will ſeem to pray mightily againſt ſin, and fleſhly luſts, which they have no deſire to be rid of, and for obtaining of thoſe graces and ſpiritual mercies, which they are not ſenſible of their want of, nor have any deſire to attain. But yet they will often make uſe of prayer, either as a veil to hide & cover their wickedneſs, & to ſhew themſelves to the world to be religious, or elſe a device to quiet their conſciences in a courſe of ſin: and ſo they make confeſſion of ſin to ſerve inſtead of forſaking of ſin; and praying inſtead of repenting. Now ſuch a kind of prayer is abominable to the Lord; yea, this kind of praying is indeed no praying, but only babling, diſſembling, and mocking of God; yea, it is lying unto God; *Ephraim* (ſaid God) *compaſſeth me about with lies*, Hoſ. xi. 12. Hypocrites do not pray, but inſtead of

praying, they lie unto God, they make as if they had a desire to know God, to love and obey God, to be holy and heavenly, when indeed they have no heart, no desire to any such thing. This is the first concurrence to make up the duty of prayer, which is a hearty and fervent desire after those graces and good things we pretend to pray for, without which our praying is no praying, but babbling and mocking of God. *2ndly*, The other concurrence to make up the duty of prayer is this, an offering up of our desires, either with the mind or voice; for if our desires are never so great to attain grace and mercy, yet if we do not offer these desires up with mind and voice, our saying of these desires alone is not praying; but where there are hearty fervent desires after grace and mercy, and those desires are expressed, either by sighing, groaning, whispering, speaking, or by voice; this is praying indeed. And this shall be sufficient to shew what prayer is,

Secondly, The next thing I promised to shew was, what it is to pray without ceasing. Now to pray without ceasing, is not to do like unto that sect, who thought that prayer was to be their whole business: no, no, there are other duties, which God hath required, and prayer must not come in the way of other duties, to shuffle them out. But in general to pray without ceasing, implies a taking hold of, and improving of all those seasons and opportunities, wherein God and our own necessities call us unto prayer, this is to pray without ceasing, But more particularly to pray without ceasing, implies:

First. A being always in a disposition & frame to pray, whensoever God requires it. The heart must be reconciled to the duty of prayer, and fall in love with it, and come to the throne of grace with delight, and also be continually resisting of that backwardness and indisposition to prayer, whensoever the season

ſon of prayer approaches, and always to watch our hearts to keep them in a praying frame.

Secondly, To pray without ceaſing, implies a praying in every ſtate and condition of life it pleaſeth God to call us to; for without prayer ſickneſs will be unſanctified, and health will be a judgment; without prayer, health and proſperity will be a ſnare, and will occaſion a forgetfulneſs of God, and a daring to rebel againſt him, and will ſerve to encourage a neglect of the ſoul and of another world; and without prayer, adverſity will be intolerable, and if it be removed, it will be in danger. Thus no condition ſhould cauſe a neglect of prayer.

Thirdly, To pray without ceaſing, implies a perſevering in prayer, and never to give over until we have our requeſt granted. God in his wiſdom is pleaſed ſometimes to cauſe us to ſtay longer for a mercy before it comes, both to make the mercy ſweeter to us when it comes, and alſo for the trial of his people's patience, whether they will perſevere and continue waiting at the throne of grace; and thoſe that are true believers will be content to wait, and to wait in God's way until their prayers are granted: ſo did the Woman of *Canaan*, when ſhe came to Chriſt for mercy, wait; though at her firſt ſuit, Chriſt gave her no anſwer at all, yet ſhe notwithſtanding, continued her ſuit with more earneſtneſs, crying after him. But then Chriſt, though he ſpake, yet gave a ſeeming denial, and told her that he was not ſent but only to the loſt ſheep of *Iſrael:* and yet ſhe would not give over, but cried again for help: but yet inſtead of helping her, he called her dog, and told her that it was not meet to take the childrens bread and caſt it to the dogs. Then inſtead of leaving off her ſuit, ſhe came to Chriſt with great humility; ſhe acknowledged herſelf to be a dog; ſhe acknowledged her own unworthineſs of mercy; but yet ſhe deſpaired not, but by

faith pleaded Christ's mercy and bounty; telling him, *Though I being a dog am not worthy to be made partaker of the childrens bread, yet the dogs may eat of the crumbs that fall from their Master's table.* This shews how thankful she would have been for the least crumbs of mercy; whereupon Jesus immediately commended the greatness of her faith; and as it were gave her the key of his treasure, and bade her take whatever she wanted, whether mercy for herself, or mercy for her daughter. *O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt.* Thus I have shewed what prayer is, and what it is to *pray without ceasing.*

Thirdly, The next thing is, to give some reasons why it is the duty and work of every christian to *pray without ceasing.*

First, We should pray continually, because God is always ready to hear; & tho' God, who knows our wants, is ready at all times to bestow upon us whatsoever we want, yet the Lord in his wisdom would have us to wait upon him by fervent prayers for those spiritual good things we want: not that prayer moves God, but because continual fervent prayer makes us fit to receive the mercy we come unto him for. If God should bestow his special saving mercy upon a sinner before he is fit for it, the mercy would be little prized by him, and God would have but little return of praises and thanks from him. Therefore for this reason, God will be sought unto for his special mercies before he will bestow them. After God had promised to pardon, renew, and hear *Israel,* yet he appoints prayer as a means to bring down these mercies before he will bestow them. *Ezek.* xxxvi. 37. *For all this I will be inquired of by the house of Israel to do this for them:* consider, friends, pardon is ready, and grace is ready, and mercy is ready to embrace you sinners.

Secondly, We must pray without ceasing, continually

nually, becauſe Chriſt is continually praying for us; Chriſt prayed night and day for us when he was upon earth, even until he was in an agony, and now he is in Heaven he makes continual interceſſion for us, *Heb.* vii. 25. Chriſt in heaven is always preſenting to his father his ſuffering, and by his ſufferings and blood-ſhed, all that we pray for has been purchaſed; the blood of Jeſus Chriſt cries in God's ear on the behalf of thoſe that pray, that the curſe that Chriſt hath bore may be removed from them, that the ſin for which Chriſt was wounded may be forgiven them, that out of his fulneſs they may receive grace for grace, and that for his ſake they may be delivered from the wrath to come. Now, friends, if Chriſt prayed for us ſo long, and ſo fervently, until he was in an agony, and ſtill prays for us in heaven; ſhall we yet loſe the benefit of all for want of praying for ourſelves? O for *ſhame!* Seeing Chriſt doth his part, let us do ours.

Thirdly, We muſt pray without ceaſing, becauſe the ſpirit is always ready to help our infirmities, *Rom.* viii. 26. The ſpirit is ready to inſtruct us what to pray for; ſo as to remove the load of this indiſpoſition to this duty, to quicken our deadneſs in the duty, to enlarge our deſires after grace, and to ſtrengthen us to wreſtle for a bleſſing.

Fourthly, We muſt pray continually, becauſe ſatan is always ready to aſſault us; *he goes about like a roaring lion, ſeeking whom he may devour*, 1 Pet. v. 8. Satan is never idle, he is always following us with ſnares or temptations, our life is full of temptations, and ſhall we not continually pray againſt Satan and his aſſaults? wicked ſpirits are continually engaged againſt us. *We wreſtle*, ſaid the Apoſtle, *with principalities and powers and ſpiritual wickedneſs in high places*, Eph. vi. 12. We had need therefore to pray without ceaſing, ſeeing they ceaſe not endeavouring to bring us both to ſin & ruin.

Fifthly, and *Laſtly*, We ſhould pray without ceaſing, becauſe our corruptions quickly get ſtrength upon the leaſt neglect of prayer. If by our watching, praying, and wreſtling with God we have got ſome ſtrength and power againſt our corruptions, as anger, pride, covetouſneſs, fleſhly luſts, ſenſuality, and our affections are moved, and inflamed towards God and heavenly things, and we are got into a ſtate of grace, yet if we once let down our watch, and neglect prayer, our corruptions will get ſtrength again, and our graces will decay, and our love to God and holy things will decay: Now all theſe things conſidered, we may ſee that it is neceſſary for us to take care that we be not careleſs, ſlight and negligent in our performance of this duty of prayer, but ſtir up ourſelves in the performance of this duty, and to pray without ceaſing.

Thus I have done with the doctrinal part: But before I proceed, I ſhall anſwer an objection which may lie in the way.

One objection which ſome will make is this, whether they ought to pray with a form? Some there be that hold a form of prayer, and ſome againſt it.

Now in anſwering this objection, I ſhall endeavour to reconcile both parties: You muſt note, that there are two kinds of prayer commanded by God: *Firſt* public or family prayer: *Secondly* ſecret prayer.

For the firſt of theſe, if you be about public or family prayer, and are the ſpeaker, it is moſt convenient for you to pray in a ſet form of words ſuited to the general neceſſities of thoſe that pray with you, and the neceſſities of mankind in general throughout the world. Such forms as thoſe are already compoſed by many eminent divines. I ſay, in public or family prayer, it is moſt convenient to pray in ſuch a ſet compoſed form of words, that thoſe that join with you, being acquainted with your

your matter, may with more readineſs go along with you in your expreſſions. And as for the lawfulneſs of thoſe forms, conſider that Chriſt hath given us a ſet form of prayer, which is the *Lord's* Prayer. Now this form Chriſt hath given us both to be a rule and pattern to direct us in prayer, and alſo to be uſed in our prayers; the command of Chriſt in *Matt.* vi. 9, is in theſe words, *After this manner pray ye*, that is to teach us that the *Lord's Prayer* is given us not only to be uſed as a form, but alſo to be a rule for directing us to pray, according to that pattern. But in *Luke* xi. 2. the command of Chriſt is in theſe words, *when you pray ſay, our Father*, &c. This is alſo to teach us that the Lord's Prayer is uſed not only as a pattern or rule, but alſo as a form to be uſed at the end of every public prayer.

To conclude this, writers record, that forms were uſed when our Saviour Chriſt was upon the earth, and Chriſt joined with them in thoſe forms: and yet Chriſt neither contradicted thoſe forms, nor blamed them for uſing them. Therefore, if your objection be concerning public or family prayer, I have ſufficiently anſwered that.

But *Secondly*, if your objection be concerning ſecret prayer, I ſhall ſoon reſolve you in that. If you aſk whether you ought to pray in ſecret by a form; This is the ſame thing as if you ſhould aſk, whether a man ought to make uſe of his legs, or make uſe of his Crutches to walk with? For you all know, that if a man be lame, and cannot uſe his legs he ought to walk by crutches until he can have the uſe of his legs, and fling his crutches aſide: Even ſo thoſe that have hitherto been ſtrangers to prayer, and alſo to themſelves, who are weak and have not attained unto the gift of prayer, and theſe ought to pray by a form, and to make uſe of ſuch forms as may lead them to the knowledge of their own par-

ticular ſins, and their own neceſſities; and then, as ſoon as they can come to know themſelves their own particular ſins and wants ſo as to confeſs them, their own corruptions and inclinations, ſo as to lament over them, their own temptations, ſo as to pray againſt them, alſo their own wants, that they may beg of God to have them ſupplied; then they ought no longer to uſe a form, but to lay it aſide as uſeleſs, becauſe they are able to expreſs their own particular wants without it. And beſides there are no written forms of prayer, that can ſuit with the ſtate and condition of every particular chriſtian; for one chriſtian is under one circumſtance, and another under another; therefore every one ought to ſtudy his own ſins, temptations, & wants, & then fall to prayer, according as he finds his own condition to be. But, for a man under whatſoever circumſtance he be, yet for him to uſe a form, it is a ſign he prays for he knows not what. To give you an inſtance or two, ſuppoſe you were a condemned malefactor, and were going to the king to beg a pardon, you would not need a written form of words to carry with you; for your own condition would teach you what to ſay. Or, ſuppoſe a beggar ſhould come to your door in a miſerable condition, ready to ſtarve with hunger, you would ſoon hear how hard he would beg, what complaints he would uſe, and what arguments he would make to move your pity, without a written form of words: Even ſo if you have but a true ſight and ſenſe of your ſin and miſery, and of your want of ſuch and ſuch ſoul mercies, you would not need a written form to teach you what to ſay to God, when you come to the throne of grace.

Thus I hope I have ſufficiently ſatisfied you in anſwering this objection, whether you ought to pray by a ſet form or not.

Thus, having done with the doctrinal part, and anſwere

anſwered theſe objections, I come now to the application. The firſt uſe ſhall be a uſe of lamentation. If it be ſuch a neceſſary duty of every chriſtian to pray without ceaſing, then what ſhall we think of thoſe that never pray, neither with their families, nor yet in ſecret; They mind nothing but the things of this world, and the luſts of the fleſh, but never ſeek after God. Surely theſe muſt be in a ſad miſerable condition. This is a lamentation, and muſt be for a lamentation.

Secondly, The next uſe ſhall be of caution: let us be cautioned againſt theſe two things:

Firſt, Let us take heed of a formal, dull, careleſs and heartleſs performance of this duty of prayer. And that it may be avoided, take heed of ruſhing unpreparedly into God's preſence. But if you aſk, how I ſhall do to prepare myſelf aright for this duty of prayer? I anſwer, if you would pray ſo as your prayers may be accepted and granted, you muſt follow theſe directions:

1. Before you go to prayer, ſtudy the knowledge of yourſelves. Examine how the caſe ſtands between God and your ſouls, and which way your deſires run: and if you find that your deſires run heavenwards, then examine the matter of your deſires, what it is you would have God to do for you: ſtudy your ſins and wants, what corruption you deſire to be rid of, and what graces you would have God beſtow upon you. If you do not acquaint yourſelves with your caſe before hand, you cannot expect to know it aright on a ſudden; as you go to pray, if you do not actually look into your hearts and lives before you go to prayer, your ſouls will be unhumbled, and want that lively ſenſe of your neceſſities, which muſt put life into your prayers. Before you pray, conſider, what ſin is, what God's wrath and hell is, and what luſts and corruptions are yet in you, and what grace and mercy you ſtand in need of. And this

will make you pray, and pray to purpoſe, with all your heart.

2. As you go to prayer, take heed of vain and ſinful thoughts, that they do not come in and ſpoil the duty. To this end, watch your hearts, your thoughts, and your affections very carefully, that your heart be not enſnared with the love of money, pleaſures, or any luſtful deſires; the thought will eaſily follow the affections.

When you come to God to prayer, come in ſuch humility as beſeemeth a condemned ſinner, and yet in the faith and boldneſs that beſeemeth a ſon and a member of Jeſus Chriſt; do not conceive a conceit of any worthineſs in yourſelves, yet take heed of any deſpairing thought in prayer; but be as conſtant in every lawful requeſt you aſk, as if you ſaw your glorious Redeemer interceding for you with his Father. Faith and hope is the life of prayer, and Chriſt is the life of hope. If you pray, and think you ſhall never be the better for praying, your prayer will have but little life; therefore let a crucified and glorified Chriſt be always before your eyes in prayer not in a picture, but in thought of a believing mind. See what the Apoſtle ſays to the *Hebrews.* Heb. iv. 14, 15, 16, *We have a great high prieſt that paſſed into the heavens, Jeſus the Son of God, that was in all points tempted as we are, and yet without ſin. Let us come therefore with boldneſs to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and have grace to help in the time of need.* Alſo *Heb.* iv. 25. *He is able to ſave to the utmoſt them that come unto God through him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them.* Yea, we have a promiſe by Chriſt for encouragement. *John.* xiv. 13. *If you aſk any thing in my name, I will do it.*

4. Labour hard with all your hearts, all the time you are praying, to keep them in a reverent, ſerious, fervent frame, and ſuffer them not to grow remiſs and

and cold, to turn prayer into lip labour, or into lifeleſs formality; the heart may be ſenſeleſs though the voice ſeems to be earneſt, and therefore the heart muſt be carefully watched, and diligently ſtirred up.

5. In the laſt place, the other caution I ſhall lay before you, is this: After you have done prayer, take heed of contenting yourſelf with the bare performance of that duty, thinking your work is done when your prayer is done, but carefully examine how your thoughts have been, in what frame your hearts have been, whilſt you were praying, and then watch for a return of prayer. Do not think you have done enough, when you have done praying, but watch for a return of prayer. *David* had been praying, and then he was reſolved to hearken what the Lord ſpeaks, *Pſalm* lxxxv. 8. So the church believing that the Lord would hear, reſolves to wait for him, *Mat.*vii. 7. *Therefore I will love the Lord; will wait for the God of ſalvation: my God will hear me.* Friends, if you do not watch for return of prayer, you do not conſider what you do, or whom you have to do with, in prayer. When you pray, you engage in an ordinance, and ſhall that be uſed in vain? you are therefore to ſtand upon your watch tower, and to obſerve with the prophet, what God ſaid to you, *Heb.* ii. 1. This is the ſecond uſe.

Thirdly, The third and laſt uſe ſhall be of exhortation, for the ſtirring of you all up both to family and ſecret prayer. As for family prayer, O be perſuaded for the Lord's ſake that you ſhould make conſcience of family prayer, not only in the evening, but every morning and evening. This is a duty that is moſt ſadly neglected in this age. O! for the ſake of your immortal ſouls, do not ſuffer your company, buſineſs, and the delights of the world and fleſh, to rob you of God's love, and to ruin your body and ſoul in hell for ever. Let me

perſuade

perſuade you to take this counſel, that what com-
pany ſoever is at your houſe, at unſeaſonable times
tell them thus: *That it is now time for you to be with
your God, it is time for you to be at home, reading and
praying in your families.* But if you cannot ſhake off
your company and buſineſs in time, then do as
Abraham did, Gen. xxii. 5. who ſaid to the young
man, *tarry here whilſt I and this lad go yonder and
worſhip.* Conſider, friends, your ſouls are more
than ten thouſand worlds; & you had better neg-
lect any thing in this world, than to neglect your
ſouls. But having ſaid ſomething for the perſuad-
ing to family prayer, in my ſermon on *Joſhua's* re-
ſolution, I need ſay no more of it here.

Therefore, *Laſtly*, Let me alſo exhort you to ſe-
cret prayer; for it is to be feared, that this alſo is
very much neglected amongſt us; nay, it is not on-
ly neglected among looſe prophane ſinners, but al-
ſo it is to be feared, it is ſadly neglected by profeſ-
ſors, & thoſe that are conſtant performers of family
duties. Many that make conſcience of praying in
their families both night and morning, yet follow
them to their chambers or cloſets, and you ſhall ſee
nothing of ſecret prayer. Friends I can tell you
and that by woeful experience too, that to pray a-
right is the hardeſt work in religion: and that by
reaſon of thoſe many opportunities, pull backs, and
hindrances in this duty. Secret prayer is the
greateſt enemy the devil has; he cannot endure
that people ſhould go to pray in ſecret, becauſe no
duty can be more powerful in the pulling down of
ſatan's kingdom in the ſoul, and ſetting up the
kingdom of Chriſt, than ſecret prayer.

Conſider that ſecret prayer, if fervent, is a ſtri-
ving againſt ſin and corruption, for whenever we
are ſtriving againſt ſin for duty, and ſin ſtrives for
the victory; whilſt duty holds us up, ſin goes
down, but when duty flags, ſin gets up. Secret
pray-

prayer if hearty, will make us weary of ſinning, or elſe ſin will make us weary of ſuch kind of praying. And if ſecret prayer once be a weariſomeneſs to us, it is a bad ſign that ſin gets the upper hand; there cannot be a more effectual way for a ſinner to kill his ſin, than by ſecret prayer; a ſinner never fights againſt ſin, with a greater zeal, nor with greater ſucceſs, than upon his knees. When once a ſinner comes to kneel in earneſt before God, his luſt muſt quickly kneel to him. Our confeſſion of ſin, and laying of it open before the Lord, our complaining to the Lord of it, our crying to the Lord againſt it, preſſing him upon his promiſe, upon his covenant to help it, theſe are the mightieſt batteries that we can make for the beating down the ſtrong hold of ſin. O be perſuaded to be inſtant and conſtant in ſecret prayer, ſet your times for ſecret prayer, and keep your times, and make a firm reſolution with yourſelves to do it. Now for the farther ſtirring you up to the duty of ſecret prayer, conſider theſe few things.

Firſt, Conſider that if you make conſcience of ſecret prayer daily and frequently, this would be an evident ſign of your uprightneſs and ſincerity; it is a ſign that you ſeek God himſelf, when none but God knows of your ſeeking of him. He is not a true chriſtian outwardly, but he is a true chriſtian that is one inwardly, whoſe praiſe is not of men but of God, *Rom.* ii. 28, 29. But he that lives in in the neglect of ſecret duties, though he paſs in the world to be never ſo good a chriſtian, yet he is in God's account no better than a hypocrite.

Secondly, Conſider ſecret prayer is a marvellous way to thrive in grace, and to grow rich towards God. By this means, faith will grow exceedingly, our love to God will abound, our ſouls will proſper. O what a great benefit does he reap thereby! How good does he find God to be unto his ſoul! So that

he can by experience ſay with the Pſalmiſt, *Pſalm* lxxxvi. 7. *That he is plenteous in mercy to all that call upon him.*

Thirdly, Conſider, ſecret prayer is a means to fit you for public ordinances; thoſe that are the moſt upon their knees in their chambers or cloſets, will receive moſt benefit in publick. God muſt be ſought unto in ſecret, to fit us for public worſhip; thoſe that, before they come to hear, pray earneſtly in ſecret, that the goſpel may come to them not in the word only, but in power alſo, for the cutting down the ſtrong hold of ſin, and for the building them up in grace and holineſs: thoſe that are likely to find the goſpel working effectually upon them, and that is the power of God for their ſalvation. *Rom.* i. 16, 17. *For I am not aſhamed of the goſpel of Chriſt; for it is the power of God unto ſalvation, to every one that believeth, to the* Jew *firſt, and alſo to the* Greek. *For therein is the righteouſneſs of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The juſt ſhall live by faith.*

Thoſe that, before they come to the Lord's ſupper, examine themſelves alone, beg that God would fetch them, and are importunate with God for ſtrength againſt every corruption, as pride, covetouſneſs, envy, anger, malice, alſo againſt a hard heart, ſluggiſhneſs and dulneſs of ſpirit, diſordered affections, ſelf-love, ſenſuality, and the like; they alſo that beg for all the fruits of Chriſt's ſuffering, and for all the graces of his ſpirit; ſuch as theſe are not like to be ſent empty away.

Fourthly, Conſider, ſecret prayer is a means to keep public duties upon the heart, after public exerciſe is ended. Your work is not done when public exerciſe is over, but you are immediately as ſoon as you come home, to go alone, and in ſecret to pray over the word that you have heard: Thus, *Firſt*, has any ſin been laid open to you whereof

you

you know yourſelf to be guilty? then confeſs it, & bewail it, and beg pardon for it, and for ſtrength againſt it, and reſolve to ſet yourſelf againſt it for the time to come. *Secondly*, has any duty been preſſed upon you? Then mention to God this duty in ſecret, to incline your heart to perform it,

Fifthly, Conſider ſecret prayer is the way to have eſpecial tokens of God's love, and thoſe joys that a ſtranger does not intermeddle with. O the ſweet meltings and thawings of the heart for ſin that the ſaints meet with in ſecret prayer! O the viſits that the great phyſician of ſouls does make to poor ſinners in this duty! and the inward joy, peace and comfort, that the ſaints do meet with in their ſecret addreſſes unto God by prayer! And, friends, ſhould not this be a great encouragement to you to be fervent in ſecret prayer; but if all this be not encouragement enough.

Conſider, in the *ſixth* and *laſt* place, that if you daily and fervently pray in ſecret, meditate and examine yourſelves, and takes pains with your own hearts in ſecret, God will reward you openly. This is the argument that Chriſt uſeth, to enforce ſecret prayer, *Mat.* vi. 6. *When thou prayeſt, enter into thy cloſet, and ſhut the door, and pray to thy father which is in ſecret, and thy father which ſeeth in ſecret, ſhall reward thee openly.* As ſecret wickedneſs ſhall be openly puniſhed, ſo ſhall ſecret duties be openly rewarded before men and angels at the laſt day.

Now in the next place I ſhall give you ſome directions for the attaining of the gift of prayer, and alſo furniſh you with matter for prayer, who are bare of matter, as well as for the help of thoſe who are of a weak capacity: And becauſe I would omit nothing that might be for the good of Souls, that may be a means and way to help them to heaven, I have now through the

the help of God, writ one treatise more upon this subject, to direct you how to attain the gift of prayer, and supply you with matter for prayer, with some directions for short ejaculatory prayer, and the Lord give you understanding.

The End of the FIRST PART.

THE

THE

Saint's Duty and Exerciſe:

Or, an Earneſt

Invitation to the Throne of GRACE.

The Second Part.

1 THESS. v. 17. *Pray without ceaſing.*

IN my firſt *(The Saint's Duty and Exerciſe)* I ſhewed,

1*ſt*. What prayer is.

2*dly*, I gave ſome reaſons why we ſhould pray without ceaſing.

3*dly*, and *laſtly*, I made ſome application: Where,

1. I gave an uſe of Lamentation.
2. An uſe of Caution.
3. An uſe of Exhortation. But,

Becauſe this duty of prayer is of ſo great conſequence, that the right performance of it ſhews a man or woman to be in a converted and renewed ſtate, and in their way to heaven and eternal glory, but the neglect of this great duty ſhews plainly, whatever they think of themſelves, that they are yet in their unconverted and unrenewed ſtate, and ſo in the broad way to hell and damnation: I ſhall therefore by the help of God endeavour to do according

ing

ing to my promise in the first book; that is, to enlarge my use of exhortation.

1*st*. By shewing how you shall attain unto the gift of prayer, and by what means you may come to be furnished with matter for prayer, that are barren of matter.

2*dly*, I shall give you some directions, concerning short ejaculatory prayer.

3*dly*, If you are dead and dull, I shall in the last place give you some directions, how you may get your hearts enlivened and quickened, and how you may come to be fervent and hearty in prayer, and so I shall conclude this subject.

Now in the first place, do as one of Christ's disciples did, *Luke* xi. 1. who came to Christ, and desired him to teach them to pray, even as *John* taught his disciples; so go you to God in the name of Christ, and desire him to teach you to pray: Say, *Lord teach me to pray*. Beg for God's holy spirit, that he would help you to pray, and assist you in prayer, and put words into your mouth: for it is the spirit that must help your infirmities, saith the apostle, *Rom.* viii. 28. *For we know not what to pray for as we ought: But the spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groans that cannot be expressed.* And if you come with an earnest desire of the spirit's help, he will assist you. But this is not all, for there are other means that you must use, if you desire to attain unto the gift of prayer.

First, You must labour to be well acquainted with yourself; study well your hearts and lives, and study truly the word and will of God, and all the branches of the Ten Commandments, which you may do by the help of the *Assembly's Catechism*, or any other book which explains the Ten Commandments. Study also the meaning of the *Lord's Prayer*, and there you will find how short you come

ſanctifying God's Name, and doing of his will, nd how far the kingdom of grace is from coming to your ſouls, when you experience the kingdom ſin and ſatan to reign there ſo much.

Secondly, For the furniſhing you with matter for ayer. In the next place, ſtudy God and Chriſt, d labour to know him in his nature, attributes, d works, and eſpecially labour to be acquainted th his dealings towards you, and then you will what a holy and righteous law you break, what God you have offended, even your maker, pre-rver and benefactor. Once more ſtudy well the th and faithfulneſs of God, and then you will what promiſes you have ſlighted, and what reatnings you have contemned, and theſe things ll cauſe you to aggravate your ſins in confeſſing them, and beſides, they will make you the more neſt in begging pardon for them, and to ſtudy d's great goodneſs to you, and to think on the veral kinds of his mercy, which he has beſtowed on you, both for your ſouls and bodies. For in-nce by what wonderful mercy your lives are pre-ved, and you ſaved from all dangers, when there ſo many diſtempers, and ſuch a multitude of ualties and dangers. And to this end, he re-ws his mercy to you every morning and every ht, and every hour; he alſo by his good hand providence feeds you with the fruits of the earth, es them virtue to nouriſh you, and gives you an etite to digeſt them: alſo he continues your eaſe ſt many others are in pain and miſery: alſo he tinues the ſight of your eyes, and the uſe of all ſenſes and members, and gives you ſweet and fortable reſt, and comfortable habitation; and des, the great mercy of all is, you being in a and undone ſtate and condition, he delivered up dearly beloved ſon a ſacrifice upon the croſs, by his ſufferings and death he might deliver you

you from hell and eternal Wrath, and purchas
heaven and ſalvation for you; and upon this accou
he hath given you the light of his holy word an
goſpel; he hath given you his ſabbath and his m
niſters, and his holy ſpirit to teach and inſtruct yo
in the way to heaven and happineſs. Now, if yo
will but ſtudy all theſe ſorts of mercies, what
bundance of matter will you find for praiſe an
thankſgivings! Study alſo what temptations yo
daily meet withal in the world; what ſnares, bait
and allurements you often meet with, prompti
you on to pride, luſtfulneſs, wantonneſs, covetou
neſs, intemperance, malice or revenge, and how
you are to be overcome by thoſe temptations, a
then you will find matter enough to pray for pow
and ſtrength againſt thoſe temptations, that you
not overcome. Study alſo what a victory you ha
got over ſuch and ſuch luſts, and then you will fi
matter of praiſe and thankſgiving to God for givi
you that victory, as the Apoſtle did, 1 *Cor.* xi.
Alſo you will find matter to bewail and lament
ver thoſe ſins and corruptions that you cannot
find you have got any victory over.

Thirdly, Study well the fulneſs of Chriſt, a
your own emptineſs, and this will furniſh you w
matter of prayer. Conſider, that in Chriſt there
fulneſs of grace, there is power to repent of
paſt, there is ſtrength againſt corruption, there
power enabling the ſinner to lay hold of Chriſt
a ſaving faith: there is the grace of divine love,
holy fear, of patience, of graces implanted in
ture, but they are all purchaſed by the blood
Chriſt, and they are all hid in Chriſt, to be beſt
ed upon all ſuch as earneſtly deſire them, and
and labour by hearty fervent prayer for the obt
ing of them. *Col.* 1. 9. *For it pleaſeth the fat
that in him ſhall all fulneſs dwell.* So in *John*
16. *For of his fulneſs all have received grace*
gr

race. Friends, if you did but once come to ſee
he fulneſs of Chriſt, and your own emptineſs, you
ould never ceaſe crying unto him, until your ſouls
e repleniſhed with thoſe ſaving graces which are
urchaſed for loſt ſinners, and laid up in Chriſt.
ou know that a child, when he ſees a pedlar's
ck opened, and therein ſo many things, will
y to his father, *father, give me this or that*: So
u would cry to God, your heavenly father, for
ch and ſuch heavenly graces, if you did but once
me to ſee the riches of Chriſt, and your own
nts and neceſſities.

Fourthly, Obſerve how the caſe goes with the
urch and people of God, and how the caſe goes
th your neighbours and relations, and with the
mily where you dwell, in reſpect to their ſouls,
d this will furniſh you with matter of prayer
d interceſſion.

Fifthly, Join as often as you can with praying
ſons, and of them you may learn to pray.

Sixthly and *Laſtly*, for your help, get ſome forms
prayer by heart (out of a book) and make uſe
them, until by them you come to know your own
s and wants, and ſo can pray better without them.
t I need not ſend you a prayer-book to learn to
y; do but ſtudy and conſider well upon what I
e wrote in this little book, and follow this rule;
mely, ſtudy well your ſins, corruptions and temp-
ions, your wants, and your daily mercies, and
n you will be furniſhed with matter enough for
yer.

Thus have I finiſhed the firſt thing I promiſed,
t is, to ſhew you how you ſhall attain the gift
rayer, and to furniſh you with matter, who are
k and barren of matter, I ſhall be brief in the
r two.

econdly, I promiſed alſo to give ſome directions
erning ſhort ejaculatory prayer; and this is a
ſudden

ſudden lifting up of the heart to God in a ſhor
phraſe, which may be done at any time, or in an
place or company, eſpecially when you are alone
when you are at your work, or when you are walk
ing or travelling by the way; then you may ofte
lift up your hearts to God in ſome ſhort prayer, an
yet no hindrance to you in what you are about:
and beſides you may meet with ſome caſualties, o
ſome temptations, or ſome motions may come int
your mind to move you to ſome ſhort breaking fort
of your ſoul to God, and as occaſion ſerves, lear
to plead with God, and plead his attributes
thus:

Firſt, When you chance to meet with any temp
ing or enſnaring object, ſo that you are afraid o
being caught in the devil's hook, then plead God'
omniſcience, thus:

*O moſt wiſe, omnipotent, all-ſeeing and all-knowin
God, from whom no ſecret thing can be hid, w
markeſt all my ſteps, and underſtandeſt my thoughts
far off, I pray thee give me grace that I may ſee th
always before mine eyes, and be mindful of my appea
ance at the bar of thy juſtice, that I may n
dare to venture upon that ſin that I am now temp
ed to.*

Secondly, If you find any ſin or luſt like to o
vercome you, then plead God's power and al
ſufficiency thus:

*O Almighty, great and glorious Lord God, wh
ſtrength is made perfect in weakneſs, I pray th
according to thy almighty power, ſtrengthen me wi
thy grace, that I may by thy help be enabled to
vercome this ſin, this luſt, this vanity.*

Thirdly, If for want of taking heed you cha
to be overtaken, and fall into any kind of
then plead the mercy and goodneſs of Go
and the merits of Chriſt, for your pardon, thus:

O most merciful, gracious, and loving father, in Christ, I humbly entreat thee, for his bitter death and bloody passion's sake, that thou wouldst pardon and forgive me this sin, and give me grace to rise again by true repentance, and to be more watchful over my heart and life for the time to come.

Whensoever you think upon your natural pollutions and defilements, then plead the holiness of God thus:

O most holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabbaoth, who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, I pray thee wash away my sins in the blood of Jesus Christ, sanctify my nature; purify my conscience from dead works.

But to be short, if you are under any doubts or fears, or under any kind of affliction, then plead the wisdom of God, that he would work all things about for your good.

Also when you are going to read, or hear the word of God, then plead God's truth and faithfulness, that, for his truth's sake, he would give you grace to hearken to his counsels, obey his precepts, embrace his promises, and stand in awe of his threatnings.

Lastly, Once more when you are going about the great duty of prayer, and find yourself to be dull and unfit for that duty, then plead the quickning spirit of God thus:

O infinite, eternal and everlasting God, who art life itself, and giveſt life and being to all creatures, and by the virtue of Christ's Resurrection, will one day raise the dead out of their graves; I beseech thee also, by the same virtue, that thou wouldst quicken my dead and dull spirit; suffer me not to bring a dead sacrifice before a living God! but take from me deadness, dullness and drowsiness, or what so hinders or indisposeth me to duty. Quicken me, I pray thee, to duty, and inspire in me, I beseech thee, a new spiritual life: and this I beg for Christ's sake.

Thus I have endeavoured, as plain as I could, to put words into your mouths, and teach you how to pray, both by a ſet duty, and by ſhort ejaculations. To conclude all, when you are going to pray, labour to ſtir up your ſouls into a lively and ſerious belief of the unſeen things of another world; and pray, as if you ſaw them before your eyes, as if you ſaw God in his glory, as if you ſaw heaven and hell, the glorified and the damned, Chriſt in heaven interceeding for you. Such a believing ſight as this will make you ſerious, and pray to purpoſe with all your hearts. Thus by following of theſe rules you will, by God's help, obtain a fervency in prayer.

Now conſider theſe things, and the Lord give you underſtanding.

The End of the Second SERMON.

ACCEPTED TIME:

AND

Day of SALVATION.

2 COR. vi. Part of Verse 2.

———*Behold now is the* Accepted Time. *Behold, now is the* Day of Salvation.

THE occaſion of theſe words may be taken from the words immediately before the text, which are the Lord's own words, ſpoken by the mouth of the prophet *Iſaiah* xlix. 8. ſaying, *I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in a day of ſalvation I helped thee*, Or, as it were, from the words before the text, In a day of ſalvation have I ſuccour'd thee. And from thence the apoſtle takes occaſion to ſhew us when that accepted time, and day of ſalvation is, wherein God hears us and accepts us, and that he doth hear, in the words of my text, *Behold, now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of ſalvation.*

From theſe words I ſhall gather this general obſervation.

That the only time to make our peace with God, and thereby to obtain mercy and ſalvation, is now, this preſent ſeaſon of grace; the time preſent is the only acceptable time, for, *Behold now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of ſalvation.*

The text affords us theſe two general parts.

Firſt, Here is a double note of attention, *Behold! Behold!*

Secondly, Here is the ſubject matter to *behold*, that is, *Now is the accepted time*; and, *Now is the day of ſalvation*.

Firſt, Here is a double note of attention, *Behold! Behold!* Now to behold a thing, is to take great notice of it, and to obſerve it, and to mind it; and we may be ſure, that whenſoever we are called upon to behold a thing, it muſt be ſomething of very great concern. There are many things that are not worth beholding, for if you mind it, you may find it in the ſcriptures, that when any thing is mentioned that is of a greater concernment than others, 'tis always brought in with this note, *Behold!* As Jer. 1. 12. *Behold, and ſee, if there be any ſorrow like unto my ſorrow*. A matter of great concernment. So *John* i. 22. *Behold! the Lamb of God that taketh away the ſins of the world*; and many others. Now there cannot be a matter of greater concern than this in my text, that *now is the accepted time, and now is the day of ſalvation*. A thing which concerns our winning or loſing of heaven for ever; a thing which concerns our everlaſting peace, or our everlaſting woe; that now is the time, when if we in earneſt ſeek for mercy, we may have it; now is the time, when if we ſeek and deſire grace, pardon and ſalvation, we ſhall be accepted; but afterwards all our praying, crying and intreating, will be in vain. Now what can be more worth our beholding than this? This is a matter which concerns ourſelves, and it is of the greateſt concernment in the world; therefore this requires a double note of attention, and to put us in mind of it; *Behold! Behold!*

And ſo I paſs, *Secondly*, from the note *behold*, to the ſecond general part, the ſubject matter to *behold*, and that alſo is double: *Behold now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of ſalvation*. Now, tho' the accepted time, and the day of ſalvation, are

two

two words, yet in ſenſe they are one and the ſame, For the *accepted time* is our day of ſalvation, and our *day of ſalvation* is the accepted time; wherein, if we unfeignedly ſeek the Lord, and turn to him by true repentance, we ſhall be ſure to be accepted, pardoned, and ſaved; For, *Behold now is the accepted time, and the day of ſalvation.*

Now in the further proſecution of this ſubject, I ſhall proceed after this manner.

Firſt, I ſhall ſhew you, that with us there is ſuch a time as an *accepted time, and day of ſalvation.*

Secondly, I ſhall ſhew you the ſeaſon when this *accepted time, and day of ſalvation is.*

Thirdly, The reaſon of it, And,

Laſtly, The application.

I ſhall begin with the firſt, and ſhew you, that with us there is ſuch a *time and day of ſalvation.* And *firſt*, in reſpect of the fallen angels, who never had ſuch a ſeaſon of time allotted them. Alas! they committed but one ſin againſt God, and that but only in thought, and yet for that one ſin they were thruſt out of heaven and reſerved in chains of darkneſs unto the dreadful day of judgment. They being once fallen, had never a day of ſalvation offered them, they never had one moment of time allotted them, upon the improvement of which they might have been reſerved to mercy. Therefore, if they ſhould pray and cry, and entreat the Lord never ſo earneſtly, that he would forgive them that one ſin and reſtore them once more to mercy, yet they ſhall never be regarded, Chriſt ſuffered not for them, there was not one drop of blood ſhed to waſh away their ſins. *For he took not upon him the nature of angels, but the ſeed of* Abraham, *Heb.* vi. 16.

Secondly, There is with us ſuch a time, an accepted time and day of ſalvation, in oppoſition to thoſe damned ſouls that are now in hell. 'Tis true the

devils being once fallen, never had mercy offered them, they never had one minute of time afforded them to work out their ſalvation, whereas theſe damned wretches once had mercy offered them, but they deſpiſed it; they once had a day of ſalvation, a time wherein they might have been accepted: alas! they had many a call from God, time after time, many a ſecret motion from his ſpirit; they once heard many a ſermon, and enjoy'd many a ſabbath; God waited upon them time after time, year after year, whilſt they continued in their rebellion againſt him; but alas! alas! they ſinned away all their precious opportunities: All this time they might have been accepted, if they had turned to God in earneſt. But lo! Now the day of grace is concluded, the door of hope is for ever ſhut againſt them, now they are left in a far more miſerable condition than the fallen angels are in; for once they had a ſeaſon of grace put into their hands, but they wilfully loſt it, and trifled it away; long did God wait and call upon them from one time to another, by his ſpirit, and by his meſſengers; but they wearied out his patience, grieved his ſpirit, deſpiſed his meſſengers, abuſed his goodneſs: Alas! the devils will never have ſuch conſiderations as theſe to torment them, as theſe damned ſouls now have.

Thirdly, There is ſuch a time as an *acccepted time, and day of ſalvation*, in oppoſition to what ſhall be with us hereafter; if we let it ſlip, when we come to hell we ſhall be in the ſame miſerable condition that thoſe damned ſouls are in, that are already there. Conſider, that men being created in a holy and righteous ſtate, and we being fallen, if God had not found a way for our recovery, we had been left in as miſerable a condition as the loſt angels were. But God, of his unſpeakable mercy, looked in tender love upon loſt mankind, and gave his dearly

dearly beloved ſon to ſuffer and die for us; and for his ſake he hath afforded every one of us a day of grace, which if we duly improve in turning to God, in receiving of this his ſon, as he is offered, we ſhall be accepted, pardoned, and ſaved; but if we ſquander away this precious ſeaſon, in following vanity and foolery, in ſatisfying our luſts, and pleaſing ourſelves until the door of mercy be ſhut, our damnation will be far more great, than if we never had ſuch an opportunity put into our hands. This is the firſt head, there is with ſuch a time as an *accepted time, and day of ſalvation.*

Secondly, I ſhall ſhew when this *accepted time, and day of ſalvation* is; that is, it is now: Now is the *accepted time*, and now is the *day of ſalvation*. The apoſtle doth not ſpeak it in the future tenſe, that ſoon after will be an *accepted time*: Tho' you continue in your ſins for a while, rebelling againſt God, grieving his ſpirit, and provoking him to wrath, yet if you turn to God hereafter, you ſhall be accepted; no, but he ſpeaks in the preſent tenſe, *behold, now is the accepted time*, all mankind are in a miſerable ſtate by nature; and it is now that the terms of mercy are offered you, and an opportunity of grace put into your hand. Mark what our Saviour ſaith, *Matt.* xxi. 26. *Agree with thine adverſary quickly, whilſt thou art in the way with him; leſt at any time the adverſary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be caſt into priſon; verily I ſay unto thee, thou ſhalt not come out thence, till thou haſt paid the utmoſt farthing.* Now God is our adverſary, for we are all by nature enemies to God by reaſon of ſin, but yet God, of his tender love, hath given us terms of reconciliation; agree therefore with him quickly, before his juſtice has ſeized upon thee, and thou be delivered to the officer, the devil, and then thou ſhalt by him be caſt into the priſon of hell, and there muſt lie in

extream and intolerable torments, until thou haſt paid the utmoſt farthing of God's juſtice, which cannot be to all eternity. Oh! therefore agree and make your peace with your God quickly, whilſt thou art in the way with him: And now you are in a fair way with him to be reconciled, for he offers you terms of mercy, he hath ſhewed you in his word by what means you may come to make an agreement with him. 2 *Cor.* xx. And if God ſo earneſtly deſires our reconciliation with him, in what a fair way are we then with God, to be reconciled. But continue in your unconverted ſtate, and in your enmity with God, a little longer, until the ſeaſon of grace be at an end, and God hath ſhut againſt you the door of mercy, then God and you will be irreconcileable for ever; then all your prayers, tears, and endeavours, ſhall never be accepted; then nothing remains but the priſon of hell, and to be caſt there to remain for ever and ever. Therefore as *Eliphas* ſaid to *Job*, ſo ſay I to you, *Job.* xxii. 21. *Acquaint now thyſelf with him, and be at peace, thereby good ſhall come unto thee,* for behold now is the time that thou mayeſt be accepted. But more particularly to ſhew you when this *accepted time, and day of ſalvation* is, it is now, in this life; for there is no making our peace with God after death. Therefore ſaith *Solomon*, Eccl. 9. 10. *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might: for there is no work nor device, nor knowledge nor wiſdom in the grave, whither thou goeſt.*

Now, through God's grace, you may be converted; if yet you are enemies to God, you may be reconciled; yet, if you are in your ſins, you may be pardoned; if yet you are in a ſtate of damnation, you may be brought into a ſtate of ſalvation; but when once death has ſhut your eyes, then your condition will be unalterable for ever: *I muſt work the work of him that ſent me whilſt it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work.*

But yet, tho' the time of this life be the *accepted time, and day of ſalvation*; yet every time of a man's life may not be an *accepted time* with him; for with ſome the *day of ſalvation* laſteth all their life long, and with ſome it doth not; therefore well might the prophet cry out: *Iſa.* iv. 6. *Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call on him while he is near*; for there may come a time, that the Lord will not be found, tho he be ſought never ſo diligently, *Heb.* xii. 17. I ſhall therefore ſhew you ſome certain ſeaſons of man's life, which if we have but wiſdom to know them, and grace to improve them, I need but little more than name them.

Firſt, The time of youth is the *accepted time. Remember thy creator in the days of thy youth*, ſays *Solomon*, *Eccleſ.* xii. 1.

Secondly, The time of health and ſtrength is the *accepted time.* In the old law, that which was offered up in ſacrifice, which was torn, blind or lame, was not accepted; this ſhews, that thoſe who ſpend the beſt of their days and ſtrength in the work of the devil, and then think to give themſelves up to God, when ſickneſs, lameneſs, and feeble old age comes; muſt never look to be accepted; God will not be put off with the devil's leavings.

Thirdly, The time of the goſpel is the *accepted time.* Praying-opportunities, ſermon-opportunities, ſabbath-opportunities, ſacrament-opportunities, theſe are the ſeaſons of ſalvation, for we know not how ſoon God may remove our candleſtick out of this place, and take from us the means of grace; & then the opportunities of grace will be at an end.

Fourthly, and *Laſtly*, The time of God's ſpirit working and ſtriving in the heart of wicked men, is the accepted time, and they that obey the calls of God's ſpirit when he ſtrives, ſhall be ſure to be accepted, let it be at what time ſoever, whether it be in youth or old age. God's ſpirit is compa-

red to *Noah's* dove, which *Noah* ſent out of the ark, and it returned to him again and again: but when he ſent the dove out a third time, it never returned to him more. So the ſpirit of God, hath its goings and comings; it comes at one time into the heart of a ſinner, and ſecretly calls upon him to repent and become a new creature: But the ſinner perhaps ſtifles theſe good motions, quenches the ſpirit, aud continues ſtill in his ſinful courſe of life. Then, it may be, the ſpirit departs, and then comes again and again, and at laſt, the ſpirit being often reſiſted, and grieved, he is provoked finally to depart, and never trouble him more; and then grace is departed and he is immediately delivered up to a hard heart and a reprobate mind that ſhall never repent. And when once he is brought to that paſs, then all the ſermons, and all the prayers in the world, will never do him any good. Oh! therefore have a care of quenching and grieving the holy ſpirit of God, when it ſecretly ſtirs and works in your hearts; but be careful to obey its motions, leſt the ſpirit being grieved, withdraws itſelf finally, & never returns more; *and then your accepted time* and *day of ſalvation* will have an end. Now with us there is ſuch a time as an *accepted time, and day of ſalvation*; and that for theſe two reaſons. I ſhall but juſt name them.

Firſt, That thereby the ſaints might have occaſion for ever to magnify the free grace of God, that he hath not left them to periſh in their miſerable ſtate, but hath offeredthem terms of mercy, and hath put an opportunity of ſalvation into their hands, and hath given them grace to improve it.

Secondly, That thereby thy wickedneſs may be left without excuſe, for there is never a damned ſoul in hell that can plead this, that they never had a day of grace. O! it would be a great leſſening

of

of their torments if they could plead ſo. Alas! there never was man or woman ſince the creation of the world, but hath had a ſeaſon of grace; there was never any that yet lived, be their lives ſhort or long, but who, before they die, have mercy offered them, and an accepted time to ſeek it in. Therefore the wicked ſhall be left without excuſe: nay, it will add much to their torments to conſider, that they once had a ſeaſon of grace and ſalvation, and yet wilfully loſt it. O let every one therefore, both ſmall and great, behold and conſider, *That now is the accepted time, and now is the day of ſalvation.*

The APPLICATION.

THE firſt uſe that I ſhall make of this, ſhall be a uſe of terror to all ſuch as ſquander and triſle away the precious ſeaſon of grace and ſalvation. Friends, you have heard that God's ſpirit will not always ſtrive with man: God is not bound to wait all a man's life long. If God continues waiting from one time to another, and yet you turn a deaf ear to his calls, and ſlight his warnings, and will go on reſolutely and preſumptuouſly in your ſin: O read and tremble, in that dreadful place of ſcripture, *Prov.* i. 22. to the end, Mark here how lovingly God expoſtulates with wicked men, ſaying, *How long ye ſimple ones, will you love iniquity; and ye ſcorners delight in ſcorning; and ye fools hate knowledge?* And then ſee his loving call and invitation, verſe 23. *Turn at my reproof.* And alſo his gracious promiſe. *Behold I will pour out my ſpirit upon you, I will make known my words unto you.* But yet all his loving expoſtulation, invitation and promiſe, prevailed nothing with them, they would run on in their evil courſes for all that; therefore ſee what God ſaith to them now, verſe 24. *Becauſe I have called and ye refuſed, I have ſtretched out my hand and no man regarded, but ye have ſet at nought all my counſels, and would none of my reproof, I will alſo laugh at your calamity, and will mock when your fear cometh; when fear cometh as a whirlwind, when deſtruction and anguiſh cometh upon them; then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer; then ſhall they ſeek me early, but ſhall not find me; they hated knowledge, and did not chuſe the fear of the Lord.* It is a common proverb among us,

He that would not whilſt he may,
When he would he ſhall have nay.

This was the very caſe of *Eſau*; he was hunting, and following his fleſhly delights, when God was calling

calling him to repentance; ſo he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, tho' he beſought it carefully with tears, *Heb.*xii. 17. Now God may call men to turn and be ſaved, both by his word and by his ſpirit, and they will not regard; but when this their day of ſalvation is ended, and they come to lie upon their death bed, O then will they cry out, *Lord pardon me! Lord, ſave me! Mercy, Lord, ſome mercy for Chriſt's ſake!* But God may juſtly anſwer them. No, ſinner, no mercy to be had, I once offered thee mercy, but thou abuſed it, therefore now the door of mercy is ſhut againſt thee for ever.

2. My ſecond uſe ſhall be for matter of encouragement to ſuch who are willing to accept of the terms of mercy, but yet keep off thro' doubt and fears.

O, I am afraid my day of ſalvation is paſt already; and if ſo, all my endeavours will be in vain, I ſhall never be accepted.

Anſw. To anſwer this, I will give you this one mark, whereby you may know whether your day of ſalvation be paſt or not. You ſay that your day of ſalvation is paſt, if ſo this is a good ſign it is not paſt; for thoſe with whom their day of grace is paſt, they grow ſenſeleſs of any ſuch matter. Again, don't you find ſometimes godly motions ſtirring in you by the ſpirit? Don't you find in you ſometimes a ſorrow for ſin after it is committed, and a deſire to leave ſin? Don't your heart ſometimes melt when you hear the word preach'd? Have you not ſome deſire to become a new creature? If ſo, then your day of ſalvation is not yet paſt; for thoſe with whom their day of grace is paſt, are given over to a ſenſeleſs, hard, and obdurate heart, that is neither moved with mercies, nor terrified with judgments; and being given over to themſelves, they run into all kind of wickedneſs with greedineſs. And as it

ſeems

ſeems this is not thy caſe, as yet; ſo now, up, and cloſe with the terms of mercy whilſt the day of ſalvation is lengthened out.

O but, ſays another, it may be I am none of God's elect! and if ſo, then all my endeavours will be to no purpoſe.

Anſw. Whether a man be elected or not, that is not in his power to know, and therefore he ought not to meddle with it: but you muſt underſtand that God decrees aright for thoſe whom he hath elected, he hath abſolutely decreed that they ſhall be juſtified, ſanctified, and ſaved; but thoſe whom God hath reprobated, he hath not abſolutely decreed that they ſhall be damned, but he hath left them to their own choice, as *Adam* and *Eve* were, and therefore their damnation is wilful of themſelves; but whether you are elected or not, if any ſo ſpeak, if you repent and be converted, you ſhall be ſaved: if not, you ſhall be damned: as many as do periſh, do not periſh becauſe they were not elected, but becauſe they would not uſe the means in order to their ſalvation.

O but (you will ſay) it may be, God will not give me grace to repent, and without his grace I can do nothing.

Anſw. Know, for your own encouragement, that both you, and every one elſe, enjoys a day of ſalvation; and this day of ſalvation is time of aſſiſtance, as well as time of acceptance. Mark the promiſes of Chriſt, *Mat.* vii. 7. *Aſk and ye ſhall have, ſeek and ye ſhall find, knock and it ſhall be opened unto you:* For every one that aſketh receiveth, and he that ſeeketh, findeth, and to him that knocketh it ſhall be opened.

Mark, Chriſt ſpeaketh there nothing concerning election; but every one, whoever he be, that aſketh, ſeeketh and knocketh for grace, pardon and mercy, and that in ſeaſon, whilſt it may be had, ſhall certainly

certainly be heard and accepted: But then you muſt be ſure to ſeek in ſeaſon; for ſeeking out of ſeaſon never yet found ſucceſs. O! if *Eſau* had but ſought repentance in earneſt, when God called him, and would accept him (but he ſought for repentance when the ſeaſon of repentance was gone) and that ruined him for ever.

Laſtly, To conclude all with a word or two of exhortation. Be exhorted as you deſire the ſalvation of your ſouls, to conſider and improve this precious ſeaſon of grace and ſalvation in working out your ſalvation before it is too late; O! it is moſt dreadful to conſider, that as God hath allotted us but one ſmall portion of time to do all that ever muſt be done for eternity and it ſhould yet be ſquandered in vanity and fookery. But, friends, whatever you ſee others do, do you in earneſt lay hold on this your day of ſalvation before it is gone. Seek ye the Lord now whilſt he may be found, and call upon him whilſt he is near. And whilſt others ſpend their time in feaſting and rioting, and in the pleaſures of the fleſh, do you ſpend your time in faſting, praying, repenting, and ſuing out the pardon of your ſins, and making your peace with God. And if you do thus, then at laſt, when time ſhall ceaſe and be no longer, you ſhall hear that bleſſed welcome pronounced from the mouth of Chriſt, *Well done thou good and faithful ſervant, enter thou into the joys of our Lord.* Which the Lord of his infinite mercy grant unto us all.

The End of the Third SERMON.

THE

THE END OF TIME: AND Beginning of ETERNITY.

Rev. x. Verſe 5, and Part of Verſe 6.

And the Angel which I ſaw ſtand upon the Sea and upon the Earth, lifted up his Hand towards Heaven,

And ſware by him that liveth for ever and ever, &c. that there ſhall be time no longer.

BEloved friends and neighbours, I deſire you all to take this ſmall treatiſe into your hands, and diligently read it over and over again; and when you have done, enter upon a ſerious conſideration of thoſe matters which are contained in this book, and lay them cloſe to your hearts, and I hope it will hold on this golden ſeaſon of grace, before it be at an end.

In my laſt treatiſe, concerning the *accepted time, and day of ſalvation*, I was forced to leave out many things that are of very great weight and concernment, becauſe they could not all be contained in ſo ſmall a diſcourſe: And it is great pity that ſuch weighty matters ſhould be loſt; and therefore upon farther conſideration of it, I have here entered upon another ſubject, which is concerning *the end of time, and the beginning of eternity*; wherein I do promiſe, thro' God's aſſiſtance, to lay day down theſe mighty concerns which I was forced to leave out in my other treatiſe *of the accepted time and day of ſalvation*: And I hope, thro' God's grace

grace, it will be the winning of many ſouls, and bring them to God, who now ſquander away their time in mere vanity: and that I ſhall do from theſe words of the angel, ſwearing with a loud voice, *by him that liveth for ever and ever, That time ſhall be no longer.*

Now from this place of ſcripture I might lay down theſe particulars:

I. The deſcription of the Perſon that thus ſwears, It was *a great and mighty angel came down from heaven,* verſe 1.

II. What was it he held in his hand: It was a little book open.

III. His geſture: he ſtood.

IV. His manner of ſtanding: it was with one foot upon the earth, nd the other upon the ſea.

V. The loudneſs of his voice: It was as loud as when a lion roareth..

VI. As he ſpake: He liſt up his hands towards heaven,

VII. He ſpake with an oath: He ſwore.

VIII. The perſon by whom he ſwears: That is, *by him that liveth for ever and ever.*

IX. And Laſtly, the matter of his oath, or the words which he utter'd; that is, *that there ſhall be time no longer.*

But I will paſs them all by, and inſiſt only upon the laſt, which are the words that this great and mighty angel uttered, and confirmed by an oath, and ſware by no leſs than the great and glorious God, *by him that liveth for ever and ever,* and ſpake them with an exceeding loud voice. The words are theſe, *that there ſhall be time no longer.*

The doctrine that I ſhall raiſe from hence is this, that at the end of this world, at the great and dreadful day of judgment, time and opportunity ſhall ceaſe, and be no longer.

From hence I ſhall lay down theſe three or four things conſiderable.

1. What time ſhall be no longer.
2. When time ſhall be no longer.
3. The reaſon why time ſhall be no longer.

And then, Laſtly, the application.

In the firſt place, I ſhall ſhew you what time ſhall be no longer, and in doing of this I ſhall anſwer an objection which lies in my way, that is, How can that be? Some may ſay, that at the laſt day time ſhall ceaſe and be no longer: Whereas it is ſaid, that then nothing ſhall remain but time, and that time ſhall wait upon eternity. When all things in the world ſhall have an end, yet time ſhall remain ſtill. Time runs parallel with the life of God, it never had a beginning and never ſhall have an end; time and eternity are linked together; ſo that we cannot ſpeak of the one but we muſt ſpeak of the other; time was before all millions of years that can be thought, and it ſhall remain throughout all ages to come, even to all eternity.

Now to anſwer this: When the angel ſwears that time ſhall be no longer, he doth not mean time conſidered in itſelf; for that ſhall remain as long as eternity endures, and ſhall never have an end: and for time to have an end is a thing impoſſible. But to take the words in their true ſenſe and meaning, it is an opportunity of time, which at the laſt day ſhall ceaſe and be no longer.

I ſhall name ſome of thoſe opportunities of time, which at the end of the world ſhall ceaſe and be no longer.

1. The time of nature ſhall be no longer; it was the promiſe of God to man after the fall, *Gen.* 8. 22. *That as long as the earth remaineth, ſeed time and harveſt, cold and heat, ſummer and winter, day and night, ſhall not ceaſe.* But at the end of the world, when the earth, and all things temporal, ſhall be diſſolved, then all theſe ſhall ceaſe, and be

be no longer. *To every thing,* ſaith *Solomon, there is a ſeaſon, & a time to every purpoſe under the ſun,* Eccleſ. iii. 1, 2, 3, &c. *a time to be born, a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted,* &c.

But at the end of the world all theſe ſeaſons and opportunities ſhall end, and be no longer; then there ſhall be no more opportunities of planting and gathering, no more ſowing, no more reaping; all opportunities of nature ſhall then ceaſe, and be no longer.

II. The time of our abode here upon earth ſhall be no longer; at the end of the world heaven and hell ſhall contain the world of men and women; either in heaven or hell we muſt abide for ever, but here we ſhall be no more.

David prays that God would *ſpare him, that he may recover his ſtrength before he goes hence, and be no more*; Pſ. xxxv. 13. That is, be no more in a mortal ſtate in this world. And *Job* vii. 9, 10. *As the clouds conſume and vaniſh away, ſo he that goeth down to the grave ſhall come up no more; he ſhall return no more to his houſe,* That is, his habitation in this world, and his place upon earth, ſhall know him no more. See alſo *Job* xiv. 14. *If a man die, he ſhall live again.* That is, he ſhall live again in another world, either in everlaſting joys, or everlaſting torments, but he ſhall never live again in this world.

III. The time of the tribulations, ſorrows, and afflictions of God's children ſhall be no longer; now they are perſecuted by wicked men, now they are ſlighted, mocked at, ſcorned and abuſed: now they have many a temptation to ſtrive againſt, now the devil torments them with doubts and fears that their ſins ſhall never be pardoned, that God will not be favourable unto them. Alas! they are fain to endure many ſorrows and calamities both outwardly

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in their bodies and inwardly in their ſouls; but at the end of time there ſhall alſo be an end of all their ſorrows: *Then God ſhall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there ſhall be no more death, neither ſorrow nor crying, neither ſhall there be any more pain; for the former things are paſt away*, Rev. xxi. 4. Then they ſhall never more be perſecuted by wicked men, ſhall never more be ſubject to any ſickneſs or diſtempers, or any kind of miſeries; then there ſhall be no more complaining, by reaſon of their outward miſeries, nor yet by reaſon of their inward trouble; ſaying, can theſe ſins be pardoned? Is there any mercy for ſuch a wretch as I am? Will God ever ſhew me any favour? No, there ſhall be none of theſe complaints heard in heaven: For when time ſhall be no longer, then all the ſorrows, miſeries and afflictions of the children of God will alſo ceaſe and be no longer.

IV. The time of the proſperity and ſinful pleaſures of wicked men ſhall be no longer: Now wicked men live many a merry hour, they run to many a merry meeting; now they can laugh and ſing, and riot, and play away their precious time: now they feaſt and drink, and game, as if they were to live for ever; but when time ſhall end, and be no longer, then there ſhall be an end of their mirth and jollity. Look in *Rev.* xviii. and read the chapter throughout, and there you will ſee a dreadful ſentence pronounced againſt the whore of *Babylon: She exceeded in riches, ſhe was arrayed in purple and ſcarlet, and decked with gold and precious ſtones, and pearls; and ſhe was full of her abominations and filthineſs of her fornications.* Chap. xvii. 8. She lived in all kind of pleaſure, but there is a dreadful woe pronounced againſt her, chap. xviii. 7. *Look how much ſhe hath glorified herſelf, and lived deliciouſly; ſo much torment and ſorrow give her; for ſhe ſaid in her heart, I ſit as Queen,*

and

and know no ſorrow. Therefore ſhall her plagues come in one day: death and mourning, and ſhe ſhall be utterly burnt with fire; for ſtrong is the Lord God who judged her. And after that, xviii. 21, 22. *A mighty angel took up a ſtone like unto a great mill-ſtone, and caſt it into the ſea, ſaying, thus with violence ſhall that great city* Babylon *be thrown down, and ſhall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers and muſicians, and of pipers and of trumpeters, ſhall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftſman, of whatſoever craft he be, ſhall be found any more in thee; and the ſound of a mill-ſtone ſhall be heard no more at all in thee. And the light of a candle ſhall ſhine no more at all in thee, and the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride ſhall be heard no more at all in thee.* This is the very caſe of all wicked men, they have their pleaſures and delights upon earth. *Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl, for your miſeries that ſhall come upon you,* ſaith St. *James,* chap. v. 1. 5. *Ye that have lived in pleaſure, and have been wanton, you have nouriſhed your hearts, as in a day of ſlaughter.* But when time ſhall be no longer, then there ſhall be an end of all their mirth and jollity; then there ſhall be no more ſinging and rejoicing, no more feaſting and drinking, no more playing and gaming, no more muſic and dancing, all theſe pleaſures and fleſhly delights ſhall have an end, & be no longer.

V. The time of the goſpel ſhall be no longer; now we enjoy many a praying opportunity, many a ſermon opportunity, many a ſabbath opportunity, many a ſacrament opportunity, but at the end of time all theſe opportunities ſhall be enjoyed no more; then there ſhall be no more preaching nor praying, no more ſabbaths nor ſacraments; no more goſpel opportunities and enjoyments; no more promiſes of pardon and mercy to ſinners; no more offers of Chriſt and ſalvation: all theſe goſpel opportunities ſhall then ceaſe and be no longer.

Sixthly and *laſtly*, The time of God's patience and forbearance ſhall be no longer; God hath reſolved that his ſpirit ſhall not always ſtrive with man. And ſaid God to his people Iſrael, Rom. x. 12. *All the day long have I ſtretched out my hand unto a diſobedient and gain-ſaying people.* Now God ſtands day after day, ſabbath after ſabbath, year after year, proffering mercy to rebellious ſinners; now God waits long upon ſinners, even all the day long, that is, all the time of their viſitation, all the time their day and ſeaſon of grace laſteth: whilſt ſinners are wearying his patience, and grieving of his ſpirit: Now God calls and calls aloud, both by mercy and judgment, both by his word and ſpirit, by loving expoſtulations and earneſt intreaties to ſinners, to turn and be ſaved, ſaying, Turn ye; turn ye; why will ye die? Why will ye not be made clean? O when ſhall it once be! Now he entreats you to come and be reconciled to him, now he offers you grace and mercy, and entreats you to accept it.

But at laſt, when the day of grace ſhall be ſpent and time at an end: then Chriſt's grace and mercy will be offered to ſinners no more; then God's patience and forbearance will be at an end: then his ſpirit will no more ſtrive with men; then they ſhall have no more calls from God to turn and be ſaved, no more tenders of Chriſt and ſalvation, no more proffers of grace and mercy; for then ſhall be an end of God's patience and forbearance of his calls and invitations: At the end of the world all theſe opportunities of time ſhall ceaſe and be no longer.

And thus for the firſt particular, *What time ſhall be no longer*; it is not time conſidered in itſelf, but the opportunities of time that ſhall ceaſe and be no longer.

II. My ſecond particular is to ſhew you what time ſhall be no longer, that is, at the end of

world; at the great and dreadful day of judgment, when the whole frame of nature ſhall be diſſolved, when the ſun ſhall be turned into darkneſs, and the moon into blood, and the ſtars ſhall fall from heaven, and when the power of heaven ſhall be ſhaken, and when Chriſt ſhall come in the clouds with power and great glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; it is then the angel ſwears *by him that liveth for ever and ever, that there ſhall be time no longer.* But as for every particular man, when once his ſeaſon of grace is ended, and when he comes to die, and to take his flight from time to eternity, then with him time ſhall be no longer.

III. The third thing conſiderable is, the reaſon why time ſhall be no longer. Now there might be many reaſons added, but I will reduce them all into theſe three heads.

1. Time ſhall at laſt ceaſe and be no longer, that there may be a total end of that which is the worſt of evils, which is ſin. It is ſin that grieves God's ſpirit, wearies his patience, and crucifies afreſh continually the ſon of God, and puts him often to open ſhame. Therefore God will at laſt put an end to time, that he may at laſt eaſe himſelf of theſe great evils: God complains of wicked men, that he is preſſed with their wicked ways, even as a cart is preſſed with ſheaves. But, *Ah*, ſaid the Lord, *I will eaſe me of my adverſaries*, Iſa. i. 24. God will at laſt put an end to time, that he might eaſe himſelf of his burthen; nay, the very ſaints themſelves, they with *Lot* are often vexed and grieved with the filthy communication of the wicked; therefore they earneſtly pray that God would haſten the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that there might be an end of theſe ſinful days.

2. Time ſhall at laſt ceaſe and be no longer, for the ſake of God's elect, and for the fulfilling of thoſe promiſes which God hath made to them.

Mark

Mark what our bleſſed Saviour ſaith to this purpoſe, *Matt.* xxiv. 22. *Except thoſe days ſhall be ſhortened, no fleſh ſhall be ſaved; but for the elect's ſake thoſe days ſhall be ſhortened.* Now there may be many that miſinterpreteth Chriſt's words in this place: For, ſay they, the world was at firſt to laſt ſix thouſand years, two thouſand before the law, two thouſand under the law, and two thouſand under the goſpel: and from thoſe words of our Saviour Chriſt, *That for the elect's ſake thoſe days ſhallbe ſhortened*, they ſay that much of their two thouſand years under Chriſt ſhall be cut off, and ſo the time ſhortened; but who can tell this, that ſo long a time the world was to endure, and much of that time ſhould be ſhortened? The ſcripture reveals no ſuch thing, the world may laſt ſix thouſand years, the laſt day may come at the end of ſix thouſand years, or it may come ſooner; that none can tell, it may be nearer than we are aware of: *For of that day and of that hour, knoweth no man; no not the angels in heaven, nor the ſon, but the father only*, ver 35. But you are to underſtand the meaning of our Saviour's, words here, thus: *Except thoſe days ſhall be ſhortened*, that is, except there comes an end, of thoſe days, *no fleſh ſhall be ſaved; but for the elect's ſake*, there ſhall come an end, for if thoſe days are not ſhortened, there would never be an end, but the world would continue for ever: And if there ſhould never be an end, then there would never be a day of judgment: & if there never be a day of judgment, then there would never be a reſurrection, and if there never be a reſurrection, then the bodies of the elect ſhould for ever lie rotten in their graves, and then indeed no fleſh ſhall be ſaved. Indeed at their death their ſpirits are ſaved; but except there come an end of time, no fleſh can be ſaved. Therefore, for the elect's ſake, there ſhall be an end of time, wherein their bodies ſhall be raiſed out of their graves

graves, and they ſhall then receive the fulneſs of their reward, which God hath promiſed, and laid up for them in heaven.

Thirdly, and *laſtly*, *Time at laſt ſhall ceaſe and be no longer*, that there might be an accompliſhment of God's threatning to wicked men: For God hath foretold, *That he will bring every work into judgement, with every ſecret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil*, Eccl. xii. 14. But if there never comes an end of time, then wicked men ſhall never be brought to a reckoning for their evil deeds, and conſequently they ſhall never come to their full puniſhment, Therefore it is neceſſary, that there ſhould be an end of theſe opportunities and ſeaſons of grace, that there might come a time wherein all mankind might receive their full reward, or their full puniſhment, according as they have ſpent their time in this world. God will not always ſuffer the wicked to proſper, he will not always let them alone to blaſpheme his name, to perſecute his ſaints, to prophane his ordinances, to grieve his ſpirit, to abuſe his goodneſs; tho' God bears with them for a while, yet he will not always bear with them, nor yet will he always ſuffer his deareſt children to be perſecuted and afflicted, to live in ſorrow and in miſery; and therefore God will certainly put an end to time, that he may put an end to the ſinful pleaſures of the wicked, and the ſorrows of his children; and puniſh the one in everlaſting torments in hell, and reward the other with everlaſting joys in heaven. That they alſo, that will not accept of mercy in time, whilſt it is offered, when God called upon them, and intreated them to accept it, that they might at laſt, when time ſhall be no longer, and when the ſeaſon of mercy ſhall be paſt, be forced too late to cry for mercy, when God will not regard them.

Now for these and the like reasons, time at la shall cease and be no longer; therefore, *the ang swears by him that liveth for ever and ever, that the shall be time no longer.*

The APPLICATION.

I Shall now go on by way of application, an there are several uses that I shall raise fro thence: As,

I. My first use shall be an use of instructio Is it so, that at the end of the world, time shall longer? Then from hence we may learn, th when time is at an end, eternity will certain begin, both eternity of happiness to the saints, a eternity of torments to the wicked. When on those opportunities of time are at an end, then w follow an infinite duration of time, that shall nev have an end, Oh! how this will increase the jo of the saints, when they are entered into their jo ful place above, to think what a vast ocean time is before them, what infinite millions of mi lions of years, yet still their joys are but beginnin and are as fresh to them, as they were at their e trance into them: And, Oh! what hell of hel will this be to the damned, when they co into that place of torments, to think what a va ocean of time is before them, to endure those to ments in, what infinite millions of millions of yea they have to lie burning in those hellish flame and yet after ten hundred thousand, thousand m lions of years, they shall be no nearer to an end; n not one minute, nor one moment nearer to an en than they were the first day they entered into them Nay, they shall be so far from ending, that th will be ever but beginning! And, Oh! what a h of hells will this be to the damned, to think up this! Oh! eternity, eternity! Oh! vast et

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nity! what heart can conceive, what tongue can expreſs the duration of it! If we count as many millions of years as there are ſtars in the ſky; and then as many millions of years as there are piles of graſs, and grains of corn that is growing, and has grown ſince the creation of the world; and then add to them as many millions of years as there have been living creatures of all ſorts from the beginning of the world, and ſhall be to the end; and likewiſe add to them the number of the duſt of the earth, and the ſands on the ſea ſhore: Now to one's thinking all theſe millions of millions of years never will run out; yet for all that, we are not come to an end, no, nor to the beginning of eternity: Eternity is an infinite duration, that ſhall never, never have an end.

II. My ſecond uſe ſhall be a uſe of reproof: Is it ſo, that at the end of time this golden opportunity of grace will be at an end, and time ſhall ceaſe and be no longer; and after this ſmall ſcantling of time, there follows an eternity, either of joy or torments. Then what ſhall we think of thoſe that ſquander away thoſe golden opportunities, in doing that which is worſe than nothing! All the time that God is offering them Chriſt, grace and mercy, and calling upon them to repent, and accept of mercy offered, all that time they waſte in following their luſts, grieving his ſpirit, deſpiſing his mercy, and abuſing his goodneſs.

A great many among the poor ſort ſpend a great part of their precious time in drudging in the world, in taking pains, and in labouring to get a little of this world's good; and it may be, as ſoon as they have got a little together, they die and leave it behind them: They can riſe early, and work, and eat, and drink, and ſleep; and that is all that they can mind: they don't conſider that they have an immortal ſoul to look after; that

they have an eternity to provide for; they can ſpare no time for theſe things, that are of the greateſt concernment. Again, others there are that have more time than the poor ſort; yet oh! how dreadful it is to conſider how their time is ſquandered and waſted away! ſome ſpend much of their precious time and day of ſalvation in dreſſing and decking themſelves up in gaudy attire, in pride and wantoneſs: And this all the time God is calling, wooing, and beſeeching people, both by his word and ſpirit to repent and turn, and accept of Chriſt and mercy. He offers them better, ſweeter, and more durable pleaſures, than theſe earthly delights, if they will but hearken to his calls, and return. Nay, that which is ſaddeſt of all to conſider, is, that the Lord's day is prophaned, which is the moſt precious ſeaſon in all the week, a day to be kept holy to the Lord, in which we are not to think our own thoughts, nor ſpeak our own words; but we ſhould ſpend the whole day in the worſhip of God, in reading and praying, and godly conference, in doing and preparing ourſelves for eternity.

On that day eſpecially, above all other ſeaſons God calls and earneſtly intreats ſinners, both by his word and ſpirit, to come in, and cloſe with the offers of mercy, and proffers to help them, if they will but turn: And yet, tho' that day above all others is the moſt golden opportunity of grace, yet a great many do ſo ſquander and waſte it away after a ſad rate; they perhaps go to church, and lend their ears awhile to the word, and then as ſoon as they come out of the church, they are diſcourſing about their worldly affairs: Nay, in many great families, they waſte their precious time in a moſt ſad manner: It would grieve any godly and devout chriſtian, to behold how the Lord's day (as well as other ſeaſons) are waſted by many

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of them. They indeed join together in going to church to hear the word preached, and ſo far they do well enough; But then afterwards, when they come home, there is ſcarce any thing ever heard from them concerning the ſermon they heard, or concerning the matters of their ſouls, but the evening of the Lord's day, as well as other times, filled up a great part of it, with their vain and unſavoury diſcourſe, in laughing and jeſting, in telling of ſtories, and what news they have heard that day. Oh! friends, what a happy thing it would be, if you would but on the Lord's day, and now and then at other times, when you are together, enter into ſuch ſerious diſcourſe as this, and ſtrive by your winning talk to help one another in the way to heaven; then you will ſpend your time well indeed. But in reproving others, I had need alſo to reprove myſelf, for I am certain, that I have enjoyed as many precious opportunities of grace, as moſt of you have, but I have waſted the greateſt part of them in vanity and foolery. The Lord give both you and I, and all of us, grace to improve our time better.

Oh! what a dreadful account ſhall we make at the great tribunal, if we waſte our time thus, when we ſhall be called to a ſtrict account how we have ſpent every hour of our time? what anſwer do we think to make when there ſhall be ſo many items brought in: as

Item, For ſo much time ſpent in vain and unprofitable diſcourſe.

Item, For ſo much time ſpent in feaſting and drinking.

Item, For ſo much time waſted at cards and dice.

Item, For ſo much time ſpent in pride and ambition.

Item, For ſo much time ſpent in idleneſs.

But, Item, For ſo much time ſpent in ſelf-examination, in repenting, faſting, praying, and godly conference: Oh! how ſhall we be able to anſwer this before the great Judge?

Now for pagans and heathens, who know not God, or a future ſtate, for them to waſte their times in fleſhly luſts is not ſo much. But ye that live under the goſpel, under the calls of God, under the ſtrivings of his ſpirit, under the offers of grace, in following our carnal delights, in deafening our ears to his call, in grieving his ſpirit, and abuſing his gracious offers of mercy, for us to do it: Oh! how ſad and dreadful will our doom be at laſt! we above all others ſhall have the hotteſt place in hell. Oh! it is a ſad conſideration for wicked men to think of, that when they come to hell, then they will cry out, Oh! that I had ſpent my time better! Oh! that I had in time hearkened to the call of God, and obeyed the motions of his ſpirit! Oh! the many days and nights that I have ſpent in rioting and drinking! Oh! the many hours that I conſumed in playing and gaming! If I had but ſpent all that time in examining my heart and life, in faſting, in praying, and in repenting, in weeping for my ſins, in begging for pardon and mercy for the ſake of Chriſt, in ſtriving to help others with me in the way to heaven, and in labouring to work out my own ſalvation.

If I had but thus ſpent my time, where might I now have been! I ſhould never have been here in this dreadful place, but now I ſhould have been amongſt yonder ſaints, rejoicing and triumphing with them in glory: Oh! that the time paſt could but be called back again, and the years that I have ſo vainly ſpent: Oh, now that I could be admitted once more into the aſſembly of God's ſaints. Oh! that God would try me once more with the means of grace (tho' I lived on nothing but bread and water.

water.) Oh! how I would condemn the world and the vanities thereof. Oh! how ſtrictly, how holy, and purely would I live. Oh! it would make one's heart even to ach, to conſider what lamentable outcries theſe damned ſouls then would make. How often were they told, and told again, what would become of them, if they conſumed their precious time in fleſhly luſts and pleaſures? and yet all the warning in the world would not prevail: Nay, if the meſſengers of God, and all the godly friends and neighbours did fall on their knees to them, for the ſake of Chriſt that died for them, that they would take pity upon their poor ſouls, and forſake their wicked courſes and ſeek for mercy and pardon before it be too late; but all the means in the world would not prevail with them. And yet when the time is at an end, and the gate of torments is before them, then they'll wring their hands and gnaſh their teeth, and cry out, Oh! that God would try me once more. Sure, if the devil did not bewitch people, certainly they would never do as they do. *How often*, ſaith Chriſt, *would I have gathered you together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but you would not*, Mat. xxvi. 31. I hope you will conſider of theſe things in time, before it be too late.

III. My third uſe ſhall be of expoſtulation. Beloved friends, you ſee here how the angel *ſwears by him that liveth for ever and ever, how time ſhall be no longer.* What is the reaſon then that you will not be perſuaded to take hold of time, in ſeeking of mercy and reconciliation from God, before it be too late? Oh! how lovingly God expoſtulates with his people, Jer. xiii. 17. O Jeruſalem, *wilt thou never be made clean? Oh! when ſhall it once be?* Thus he expoſtulates with every ſtubborn rebellious ſinner: Oh! ſinner, when wilt thou be made clean; why wilt thou not repent, and be reformed? How

long ſhall I ſtand offering thee Chriſt, pardon and peace, and thou not accept the offer? How long ſhall I ſtand waiting for thy repentance, and thou continueſt in thy impenitency, and wearieſt my patience, and will not turn? How long ſhall I ſtand proffering thee mercy and pardon, and thou deſpiſeſt it? What is the reaſon that no means will work upon thee? How often have I ſought to allure thee with mercies, and terrify thee with judgments; and have given thee warning after warning, and yet nothing will prevail? Is the loſs of thy immortal ſoul, the loſs of heaven and everlaſting life, ſo ſmall a matter with thee, that thou regardeſt it no more? Is it nothing to endure everlaſting burning? Is it nothing to lie amongſt devils in the lake of fire and brimſtone? For my part, I deſire not thy everlaſting miſery, but had rather thou wouldeſt in time accept of mercy, that thou mayeſt be ſaved. If I had any delight in thy damnation, thou hadſt been in hell long before this time: I had never ſtood waiting upon thee ſo long as I have done, ſuffering thee to grieve my ſpirit, to tire my patience, to turn my grace into wantonneſs, trample under thy foot the blood of my dear ſon that was ſhed to waſh away thy ſins. If I had delighted in thy damnation, I had never called upon thee ſo often as I have done. Oh! ſinner do I deſerve this unkind dealing at thy hand, that thou ſtill abuſeſt my mercy and goodneſs? When wilt thou return to me with a full reſolution to leave thy ſins, and become a new creature, and accept of mercy offered? When ſhall that time come? Oh! when ſhall it once be? It is ſuch a time as would rejoice the angels to behold it.

And, friends, is it not a great deal better to be a joy to angels, than a laughing ſtock to devils? Oh friends, if all theſe loving expoſtulations will not prevail with you, I know not what will.

IV My

IV. My fourth uſe ſhall be a uſe of motive. If all thoſe expoſtulations will not prevail, I will lay down ſerious conſiderations to move you to a timely repentance; and I will try what they can do, whether by them you will be ſtirred up to improve your golden ſeaſon of grace, before it be at an end.

Conſider, firſt, how precious your time in this world is, it is far more precious than gold, for all the gold, all the riches, and all the treaſures of this world, cannot purchaſe one minute of time when it is gone and paſt: People don't know how precious their time is, until they come to the end of it; and when once time is at an end, oh! then they know what the worth of it is. Now ſinners enquire what they ſhall do to paſs away their time; time is ſo plenty with them, that they know not what to do with it, tho' they have ſo many ſinful luſts to mortify, ſo many corruptions to ſubdue, ſo many ſins to repent of, Chriſt to get an intereſt in, and their pardon to ſue out, and temptations to ſtrive againſt; ſo much work to do, for God and their own ſouls, and the ſouls of others, and and yet they know not how to ſpend their time. Ay, but when once they come to lie upon their death-bed, and ſee nothing before them but an eternity of miſery: Oh! then they would give ten thouſand worlds, if they had them, but for one year, or but for one quarter of a year of that time which they ſo vainly ſpent? Oh! if people did but know the worth of time, as much as they will do then, they would away with their cards and dice, and other paſtimes, and they would ſpend every minute of it to the beſt advantage they can for their ſouls eternal welfare.

2. Conſider how dangerous it is to ſquander and waſte away your precious time in fleſhly luſts and pleaſures; It may be you think of repenting hereafter, when you come to lie upon your death-

bed; but who knows but that you may die ſuddenly, as many do, without the leaſt ſpace to repent? and beſides it is madneſs for any to think to do that great work in an inſtant of time: But ſuppoſing you ſhould have a breathing ſpace at the day of death, yet who knows how long the ſeaſon of grace may continue: *Behold*, ſaith the apoſtle, *now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of ſalvation!* 2 *Cor.* 6. 4. It is now that God calls, and offers you his ſpirit to aſſiſt and help you, and promiſes to accept you, if you will but come at his call, before he hath given you over to yourſelves. God, who offers you grace to-day, it may be will not offer it again to-morrow. I have read a ſad ſtory of an extravagant young man, who being often admoniſhed by his godly friends to repent and reform his wicked life, preſumptuouſly gave them this anſwer: *That if, when he lay a dying he did but ſay three words of repentance, he ſhould do well enough:* Theſe three words I ſuppoſe were to be, *Lord have mercy upon me.* But on a certain time as he was riding over a narrow bridge with his horſe, his horſe ſlipt, and fell in with him, and after ſtruggling awhile, he was heard to ſpeak theſe three words, *Devil take all.* Theſe were his three words of repentance; it is therefore exceeding dangerous to put off our great work, until time is at an end.

3. Conſider, that the ſeaſon and opportunity of grace is the greateſt mercy that we can enjoy. It was ſuch a mercy as was never vouchſafed to the fallen angels. Thus God's mercies are renewed to us every morning: And, friends, if you ſquander and waſte away ſuch golden opportunities, as God hath put into your hands, you trample under feet one of the choiceſt of God's mercies; and do you think that God will bear this at your hands?

4. Conſider, that your accepted time and ſeaſon of

of grace is continually waſting [illegible] prove it well or not. Time [illegible] away, and will not ſtay for you [illegible] following your ſinful pleaſures, and wearying of God's patience, but is continually haſtening away; when once the ſun is up, it keeps its courſe, and never ceaſes going on until it is gone down; when once a candle is lighted, it keeps continually burning until it is done; when once a glaſs is turned, it never ceaſes running until it is out; ſo ſoon as a man is born, God does immediately put an opportunity of time in his hands, and then it paſſes and keeps paſſing away, and never ceaſes running until it is at an end; one day follows another, one ſabbath follows another, and ſo time keeps running on, until at laſt it will ceaſe and be no longer.

5. Conſider how dreadful your ſtate will be at laſt, if time ſhould be at an end, before you have made your peace with God: If whilſt you are ſinning away your precious time, God ſhould clap a curſe upon your ſouls, and ſwear in his wrath that you ſhould never enter into his reſt; and ſo ſhut againſt you the door of mercy for ever. Oh! what a dreadful condition would you be in then! Oh! Then had it been well for you if you had never been born! Then you may knock at the gate of mercy too late, as the fooliſh virgins did: Saying, *Lord open unto us.* But the Lord will ſend you away with this dreadful ſentence, *I know you not, depart from me ye workers of iniquity.* This is the moſt dreadful place that is to be found in the goſpel; read and tremble at it, it is in *Luke* xix. 41, 42. *And he drew nigh to* Jeruſalem, *and looking about* (but it was with tears in his eyes) *he wept over it, ſaying, If thou hadſt known, even thou, at leaſt in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes.*

example of *Francis Spira*, ſo [illegible] that it is enough to make the ſtouteſt hearts to ake, to hear the ſtory of it: This *Francis Spira* was a civil lawyer; he was brought up, and lived forty years and more in the *Romiſh* religion; about that time the ſun of the goſpel was riſen in *Europe*, and this new doctrine he liked and loved ſo well, that he forſook his *Romiſh* principles and embraced the goſpel of Chriſt, and preached it firſt to his neighbours, and then in public meetings to the whole country; inſomuch that he converted many from the Romiſh principles to the doctrine of Chriſt, and cauſeth them to embrace the goſpel, until he at laſt brought himſelf into great danger, in that he muſt either againſt his knowledge and conſcience deny Chriſt, or elſe endure the extreameſt torments that malice could inflict; or elſe he muſt forſake his houſe and land, his wife and children, yea, his own country, and betake himſelf to a foreign country, there to endure a thouſand miſeries: and he not knowing what courſe to take; nor what to do, the ſpirit of God came to him and encouraged him to ſtand faſt in the faith of Chriſt, telling him he ſhould not ſet his hand writing to the legate, that Chriſt was able to defend him, and that tho' he did go to priſon, and to death, yet the eternal reward remains for him in heaven; yet this miſerable man conſulting alſo with fleſh and blood, went and ſet his hand to the legate, and ſo in part denied Chriſt; and then he was fain alſo to promiſe to ſeal it in his own country; and as he was going the ſpirit of God met with him a ſecond time, and he thought he heard a voice ſaying unto him, *Spira! Haſt thou unhappy man given thy hand writing to the legate? Yet ſee thou ſeal it not in thine own country. Doſt thou think eternal life ſo mean a thing, as to prefer this preſent life before it? Remember, man, that the ſuffering of this preſent life is incomparative to the glory*

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that ſhall be revealed. If thou ſuffereſt with Chriſt, thou ſhalt alſo reign with him. Thou canſt not anſwer for what thou haſt already done: nevertheleſs the gate of mercy is not quite ſhut: O heap not ſin upon ſin leaſt thou repenteſt when it be too late. Now was *Spira* in a wilderneſs of doubt, not knowing whither to go, or what to do: At laſt he went and aſked counſel of his friends about it; and they, without any conſideration, perſuaded him, that by no means he ſhould bring himſelf and them into any danger, but that he would go to the legate, and perform what he had promiſed.

Then in the morning he deſperately gets up, and enters the congregation, where maſs being finiſhed, he recites the abjuration, word for word as it was written. This done he was immediately fined thirty pieces of gold, and then reſtored to his goods, wife and children; but no ſooner was he departed, than he heard a direful voice ſaying unto him, *Thou wicked wretch! thou haſt denied me! thou haſt broken thy vow! Hence apoſtate! Bear with thee thy ſentence of eternal damnation!*

Immediately *Spira*, trembling and quaking, fell into a ſwoon. Help was at hand for the body, but never could he find any eaſe in his mind, but was continually tormented with the ſenſe of God's wrath, and was captivated under the avenging hand of God.

Then his friends began to repent, too late, of their raſh counſel. When he related to thoſe that came to ſee him, all the paſſages that had happened, it made them all to weep and tremble. *As ſoon as I knew the ſentence of Chriſt was paſſed againſt me, I knew that I was utterly undone!* He felt a continued torment of his mind, and a continual butchery of his conſcience, then he profeſſed, the damned whichar e in hell endure not the like miſery: *I feel,* ſaid he, *that God more and more hardens me: I am*

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one of thoſe reprobates that God would not have to be ſaved! And ſo continuing in this ſtate for ſix weeks and more, he then at laſt ended his miſerable life in a dreadful condition.

I aſſure you this is the dreadfuleſt example that I ever read in my whole life; the Lord grant that none of us all may ever come to this.

6. And laſtly, conſider what a happy condition you are yet in, that you may enjoy your golden ſeaſon of grace, that God has not yet done calling, that his ſpirit has not yet done ſtriving, that his patience has not done waiting.

O how lovingly did the ſpirit call upon *Francis Spira* the ſecond time, after he had ſet his hand writing to the legate, and told him that yet the gate of mercy was not quite ſhut. O heap not ſin upon ſin, leſt thou repenteſt when it be too late. *What! was not the gate of mercy quite ſhut?* O what a comfortable word was that! As far as he had gone in renouncing his profeſſion, and denying of Chriſt, yet it was not too late, yet there was mercy in ſtore for him; and if he had but then obeyed the ſpirit, and had not gone any farther, but repented of what he had already done, O what a happy man he had been for ever?

V. And laſtly, I ſhall conclude with a few words of exhortation: I ſhall exhort you, in the words of the apoſtle, *Redeeming the time, becauſe the days are evil.* Is it ſo that at laſt *Time ſhall be no longer?* Then let me exhort you now wiſely to redeem your accepted time, before it be gone; *O let the time paſt ſuffice, wherein we have wrought the will of the gentiles,* Peter iv. 3.

Beloved friends, you have waſted enough and too much of your time in the pleaſures of the fleſh, and in the works of the devil. O! be perſuaded for the Lord's ſake and for your own ſoul's ſake, to ſpend the ſhort remainder of your time in the

ſervice of God, in working out your own ſalvation: whatever you are about, and whereſoever ye are, whether alone or in company, yet ſtill be redeeming your time: When you are alone, then let your time be redeemed by ſelf-examination, by ejaculation and prayers, by meditations and contemplations, and when you are among company, tho' it be about the works of your calling, O then be careful to improve your time well; inſtruct them you ſee are ignorant, reprove them that are ſinful: ſpend your time when you be together, in diſcourſing to one another of the end why you were born, of your miſerable eſtate by nature, of the ſufferings of Chriſt for your ſins, of the ſhortneſs of your time, and of your future eſtate in another world. Let theſe and ſuch like diſcourſes fill up your time. Oh! labour with all your might to win the ſouls of one another, and to help one another to heaven daily, *while it is called to-day*: O what a happy work you would perform, if by your ſeaſonable diſcourſe you ſhould convert a ſoul to God.

To conclude: Be exhorted to ſpend the ſmall remainder of your time in praying, repenting of your ſins, and working out your own ſalvation; and then at laſt when time ſhall ceaſe and be no longer, you ſhall be received into an eternity of joy and felicity, there to live and reign for ever.

Conſider what hath been ſaid, and the Lord give you underſtanding.

End of the Fourth SERMON.

A CONFESSION of PRAYER

For a PENITENT SINNER

On this SUBJECT or DISCOURSE.

O Moſt gracious, and glorious, and eternal Lord God; who art the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and the end, the firſt and the laſt; thou art God from everlaſting, and thy years ſhall have no end; thou are righteous in all thy works; thou art of purer eyes than to behold the leaſt ſin with an allowance; ſo that as ſoon as the angels had ſinned, thou didſt immediately caſt them down out of heaven, and reſerveſt them under chains of darkneſs, under the dreadful coming of the great day, without affording them the leaſt opportunity of ſeeking peace and reconciliation with thee: But thou haſt ſpared me from one ſabbath to another and ſtill waiteſt for my repentance: yet neither mercies nor judgments could work any good effects upon me. I made many promiſes to lead a new life, if it ſhould pleaſe thee to reſtore me once more to my former health, and then thou in mercy didſt try me as it were with another life: But then, miſerable wretch that I am, I returned to my old courſe of life, ſoon forgetting the promiſe which I made in my ſickneſs: *Yea, all the day long thou haſt ſtretched out thy hand unto me.* But Oh, miſerable wretch that I am, I have continued in my rebellion againſt thee, quenching and grieving thy holy ſpirit, which would have ſealed me unto the day of redemption, wearying thy patience, and abuſing thy mercy and goodneſs, and turning thy grace into wantonneſs. O Lord, what a wonder is this, that ſuch a wretch as I, am not in hell; that ſtill thou ſpareſt me, and expecteſt

expecteſt my repentance: that there is hope that the gate of mercy is not quite ſhut againſt me; ſure if thou hadſt took any delight in my damnation, thou could'ſt never have borne ſo much at my hands as thou haſt done? thou wouldeſt not have ſuffered me to have abuſed thy mercy and goodneſs as thou haſt done: But ſeeing, O Lord, thou haſt ſpared me ſo long, and ſtill continued to me the ſeaſon and means of grace, O Lord, I will never more ſpend my time as I have done, in following the pleaſures of the fleſh, and grieving thy holy ſpirit; and do purpoſe and reſolve, thro' thy grace aſſiſting me, to reſign myſelf to thy holy and heavenly will, and to ſpend the remainder of my time in obedience to thy holy law and commandments; and to this end, O Lord, I humbly beſeech thee to grant me the aſſiſtance of thy holy ſpirit, for of myſelf I can do nothing; and let this thy ſpirit mollify my hard and obdurate heart, that I may with ſorrow bewail my loſt and miſpent time, and that I double my diligence for the time to come. O Lord, tho' I have long continued my rebellion againſt thee, yet Lord, I beſeech thee, caſt me not off now at length, a miſerable ſinner, who returns unto thee with an humble and penitent heart: take not away from me thy holy ſpirit, tho' it hath long and often been grieved by me: Say not that it is now too late. Lord ſhut not againſt me the gate of thy mercy, let not my ſoul periſh, for whom Chriſt died: and if it be thy will that I periſh, Lord I have caſt myſelf down at the feet of Chriſt: and if I periſh, I will periſh there: Lord I beſeech thee give me grace that I may now prize this mercy better than I have done. Lord give me grace to ſpend my time in faſting, praying, repenting, and labouring to work out my ſalvation; ſo that at the laſt, when time ſhall ceaſe and be no longer, I may enter into an eternity of joy and felicity. Theſe, and other mercies, which

thou

thou knoweſt to be needful for me, I humbly beg at thy hand in that form of prayer, which Chriſt himſelf hath taught me, ſaying,

Our Father, which art in Heaven, &c.

If you know theſe things, bleſſed and happy are you, if ye thus redeem now your accepted time and ſeaſon of grace; which that we may all do.

The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the love of God the Father, and the ſweet comfortable fellowſhip of God the Holy Ghoſt, be with us, and remain with us, both now, and for evermore. Amen.

JOSHUA's

JOSHUA's RESOLUTION TO SERVE the LORD, &c.

Josh. xxiv. Part of Verse 15.

But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

THESE are the words of *Joshua* to the tribes of *Israel:* For having in this chapter declared unto them the many benefits which God of his mercy had bestowed on them; as particularly in verse 13, in that he had given them a land they laboured not for, and cities which they built not, and vineyards and oliveyards to eat of, which they planted not: *Joshua* having thus laid before their eyes God's benefits, he in verse 14, exhorts them to offer unto God a thankful and obedient heart for those benefits which he had bestowed upon them: *Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity, as your fathers served, and do serve the Lord.* And so I fall immediately upon the words of the text, wherein we have these two considerable things.

First, The freedom which *Joshua* seems to give the tribes of *Israel,* in case they refuse to serve the Lord, that they will chuse whom they will serve.

Secondly, His resolution concerning himself and family: *As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*

Now

Now in this ſmall treatiſe, I ſhall join theſe two together in this obſervation: That is, however the men of this world live, whatever they do, what ways ſoever they follow: a child of God is fully bent and reſolved to cleave to the Lord, and to take care that his family and all under his charge walk in the ways of holineſs and piety.

Now for further handling this ſubject, I ſhall proceed after this manner.

Firſt, I ſhall ſhew you what the reſolution of a chriſtian is.

Secondly, The reaſon of this reſolution, And,

Laſtly, The application.

I. To ſhew what the reſolution of a chriſtian is. 1. It is a full and firm reſolution. 2. It is a preſent reſolution. 3. It is a ſettled and deliberate reſolution.

Firſt, The reſolution of a chriſtian is a full and firm reſolution; the men of this world naturally chuſe ſin, death, and hell; they chuſe death and damnation before life and ſalvation; they reſolutely run on in the ways of luxury, wantonneſs, drinking, gaming, and all manner of lewd and looſe practices: and though they are told and told again, both by the meſſengers of God's word, and their godly friends, whither theſe ungodly ways will lead them, yet they will run on ſtill, and take their own courſe, as if they were in love with their own ruin and deſtruction. But a true chriſtian, after his reproof and admonition, when he finds that they will not be reclaimed, he, as it were, bids them take their courſe, and chuſe whom they will ſerve, as *Joſhua* did the people of *Iſrael*: But for his part he reſolved, with full bent and purpoſe of heart, to give himſelf wholly to the Lord, and chooſe him for his portion, and to give up himſelf, ſoul and body, as an inſtrument for his ſervice.

Now

Now the reſolution of a chriſtian is not a ſick-bed promiſe, but a full bent and purpoſe of heart to lead a new life. There are many that fairly reſolve; we reſolve, but every weak promiſe is not a full reſolution. Alas, how many are there, who under a ſharp fit of ſickneſs, or under ſome judgment ready to befal them, will promiſe what fair new creatures they will become; what new lives they will lead, how holy and how purely they will live; but if it pleaſes God to ſpare them, and give them a time of reſpite, then how ſoon are theſe vows and promiſes forgot! Thus the children of *Iſrael*, how fairly did they promiſe, *Deut.* v. 27. *All that the Lord ſhall ſpeak, we will hear and do:* But though they had a tongue to promiſe, yet they had no hearts to perform; as you may ſee, verſe 29. *O that there was ſuch a heart in them, that they would fear me and keep my commandments, that it may be well with them.* But as for a ſincere and returning ſinner, he not only promiſes, but he reſolves to yield up himſelf body and ſoul to be the Lord's: yea, the whole frame of his heart is bent that way. As an unconverted wicked ſinner goes on in ſin, with a full purpoſe of heart; even ſo a returning ſinner, who is coming to Jeſus Chriſt, ſerves him with a full purpoſe and reſolution of heart; and as a reſolute ſinner neither minds mercies nor judgments, reproofs nor admonitions, neither perſuading nor entreating by miniſters, or friends, will ſtop him in his ſinful courſe; ſo on the other ſide, a returning ſinner, that is reſolved for Chriſt and holineſs will not be drawn back, neither by promiſes nor threatenings, neither by frown nor flatteries. Let his ſinful companions entice him by ever ſo many arguments, he will not conſent, but he is fully bent and reſolved for heaven and happineſs, whatever it coſt him; and therefore, ſeeing the weakneſs of his own

fleſh, and his eternal inclinations, to be overcome by the leaſt temptations, therefore he applies to the throne of grace, and there pours out earneſt prayers and ſupplications, for the aſſiſtance of Divine Grace to ſtrengthen him in the inner man; he dare not truſt to his own ſtrength, he conſiders how ſoon *Peter* was overcome, notwithſtanding his reſolution to ſtand, ſaying, *If I ſhould die with thee, I will not deny thee*; and yet becauſe he was too confident of his own ſtrength, it pleaſed God, for his trial, to leave him to himſelf: How ſoon he denied and forſwore his Lord and Saviour! he began to curſe and ſwear *that he knew him not*; Mat. xxvi. Now, I ſay, a returning ſinner, conſidering this, dares not reſolve in his own ſtrength, but labours and endeavours by the uſe of all means to get ſtrength from heaven, and in the ſtrength of Chriſt he labours to go on towards the heavenly mark he aims at; he reſts not in any certain attainments, but truly reſolves by the help of the divine grace, towards the mortification of the whole body of ſin, and for the attainment of grace and holineſs unto perfection.

And after he has done his beſt, yet ſtill he feels luſt to be ſtrong in him, and grace weak, therefore he is more and more outrageous againſt his natural inclinations, and his earneſt deſires and endeavours are to be more and more humble, more patient, more meek, more holy, and more heavenly; let the the devil tempt him with riches, honour, long life, and all earthly happineſs, on condition he turn back again into the way of ſin, yet he will not yield, but he reſiſts him with all his might and ſtrength? nay, though all the powers of hell uſe their utmoſt endeavours to draw him back, though the fleſh entice, and the wicked world uſe all means to diſcourage him, yet in ſpite of them all he is reſolved to go on in his holy courſe? for *neither*

death

death nor depth, nor any creature is able to ſeparate him from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord. Rom. viii. 39.

Thus a ſincere returning ſinner is fully bent and reſolved to give himſelf up body and ſoul to the Lord: And the whole frame and bent of his heart is towards grace and holineſs.

This is the firſt thing conſiderable, that a chriſtian reſolution is a full reſolution.

Secondly, It is a preſent reſolution he is not for putting off from one time to another, as if he did not care whether it was done or no. Even ſo a chriſtian, that is fully bent and reſolved after grace and holineſs longs and deſires the attainment of his holy ends, the whole frame of his heart is ſet that way; and therefore he preſently ſets about the work without delay. Indeed, a hypocrite has many purpoſes and reſolutions to repent, and become a new creature; but he delays and puts off from one time to another, being loth for the preſent to part with ſweet ſin, with his beloved luſt, which ſhews that his reſolutions is not a firm and ſettled reſolution, his purpoſes are unſound and hypocritical.

There was one, *Luke* ix. 61. who made a kind of reſolution to follow Chriſt; but his reſolution was not for the preſent, he begged liberty to go once more to his ſinful companions, and take his leave of them. *Lord ſaid he, I will follow thee, but let me firſt go and bid them farewel which are at home at my houſe.* This ſhews, that his purpoſe and reſolution was not ſincere; he made a kind of reſolution to follow Chriſt, but here lies the caſe, there was not a thorough change wrought in him, he had not rooted out his beloved ſin: the frame and bent of his heart was more towards the following of his luſt, than it was to follow Chriſt, and yet looking back with pleaſure and delight upon his old ſinful courſe of life, he was not fit for the kingdom of hea-

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ven; as our Saviour tells him, ver. 62, *No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.*

Thus a wicked man, when he is intreated and perſuaded by a miniſter of God's word, or by any of his godly relations, to prevent and forſake his evil practices, and to lead a new life, he perhaps under theſe godly admonitions makes fair promiſes, and has ſome purpoſes and reſolutions to repent, and become a new creature, and yet notwithſtanding theſe purpoſes and reſolutions, he has many delays and puts off, becauſe his heart remains ſtill wedded to his luſt. The drunkard promiſes, that he will return and follow Chriſt; but he begs leave to go once more to the alehouſe, and take leave of his drunken companions, and to take one merry cup more with them, and then he will come and follow Chriſt; he hath friends at home at his houſe, and he muſt firſt go and take his leave of them, and enjoy a little more of their jovial company, then he will follow Chriſt. The covetous muſt have leave firſt to purſue a little more after this world's goods, and then he will follow Chriſt. The voluptuous, muſt have leave firſt to partake of a little more of the ſweet of ſin, he muſt enjoy a little more of his beloved pleaſure, he muſt down with one ſweet morſel more, and then he will follow Chriſt.

Thus ſin is ſo ſweet unto a wicked man, the world and the fleſh are ſo bewitching, that notwithſtanding a ſinner's fair promiſes and purpoſes to repent and turn to God, by theſe he is hindered of putting any thing into practice, but procraſtinates and puts off from one time to another, until perhaps, time is at an end, before he has done any thing in order to his eternal ſalvation.

But, a chriſtian that is fully and firmly reſolved to dedicate himſelf to the Lord and his ſervice, ſ

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that the whole frame of his heart is bent that way, he is ſo far from delaying and putting off from one time to another, that he is ever reſtleſs and can find no contentment in any thing he enjoys, until he has got an intereſt in Chriſt, until he has got ſome aſſurance of the love of God and the pardon of his ſin: it grieves him to the very heart, to think that he ſhould be ſo wild and fooliſh, and to waſte ſo much of his precious time, as he has done in the fleſhly luſts, in abuſing God's mercy and goodneſs, and grieving his ſpirit, in that he has made a good and gracious God wait upon him ſo many years, whilſt he continued to run on in a courſe of rebellion againſt him. And therefore now he reſolves, through the grace of God aſſiſting him, from this time forward, to bid an everlaſting farewel to his beloved ſin; he now fully reſolves to continue no longer in the ſinful courſe of life; he is ready to cry out with *St. Auguſtine*, How long ſhall I ſay to-morrow, to-morrow? Why ſhall not this day be the day of my converſion? He therefore without delay ſets about the work of converſion: he now begins to labour, and ſtrives to work out his ſalvation.

Thus a chriſtian's reſolution is a preſent reſolution.

Thirdly and *laſtly*, A chriſtian's reſolution is a ſetled and deliberate reſolution.

He doth not, as many do, take up a ſudden and conſiderate reſolution to follow Chriſt; but he diligently conſiders,

I. What it muſt coſt him to be a thorough chriſtian; the death of his beloved ſin, he knows it muſt coſt him, he knows he muſt part with every ſin, even with his moſt fleſh-pleaſing ſin, for Chriſt, or elſe he can be no chriſtian: and he conſiders it may coſt him the loſs of his credit and good name, and liberty, nay the loſs of life itſelf.

Now a penitent sinner considers diligently of all things before he enters upon his christian course, lest after he has gone far with Christ, persecution comes, and he apostatize and fall away, and so his latter end be worse than his beginning: *What man*, saith our Saviour, *intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it, lest haply after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him*, Luke xiv. 28, 29. *So whosoever forsaketh not all that he hath cannot be my disciple*, ver. 33. Many have gone far with Christ, so far as their interest lay with the interest of Christ; but when the interest of Christ and their own interest is crossed, then they have apostatized and fell away. But on the contrary, a wise christian, before he enters upon a new life, first sits down and counts the cost, he considers on *Peter*, how sadly he fell when Christ had left him unto himself, notwithstanding his strong resolution, saying, *If all should deny thee, yet will not I.* Therefore he dares not to propose and resolve in his own strength; for he knows himself to be very weak, and cannot move one step towards heaven without divine assistance; then he is day and night in earnest prayers to God for strength from heaven, and so in the strength of Christ he is resolved to run all hazards with him, he is resolved to venture all for him; to venture the loss of a good name, the loss of liberty, and the loss of life itself; as he expects to reign with Christ so he resolves to choose him with all his offices, as a prophet to instruct him, as a saviour to save him from sin, as well as from punishment; he is resolved to cut off his right hand sins, and pluck out his right-eye sins; he is resolved to spare no sin, but to strive against it, to watch against it, and fight against it with all his might; he is resolved to follow Christ

Chriſt thro' all difficulties and dangers, thro' ſufferings and perſecutions, thro' life and death, until he comes to reign with Chriſt in glory.

Thus have I done with the firſt thing conſiderable, what the reſolution of a chriſtian is; I muſt be very brief in what follows.

II. The reaſon of the neceſſity of his reſolution. Now for a chriſtian to make a ſettled and firm reſolution is very neceſſary.

1. Becauſe that until a man ſets a firm and full reſolution to turn to God, he is in a ready way to fall by every temptation; he is apt to put off and delay his repentance from time to time, he is ſtill liable to give himſelf more and more liberty to all kind of wickedneſs, to let the bridle looſe to his luſt: nay, until a man comes to a full and ſettled reſolution, he lies in the ready road to open prophaneneſs, and to the neglect of God, and holy duties. But when a man comes to a reſolved point, when the whole frame and bent of his heart is ſet towards Chriſt and holineſs, then there will appear earneſt endeavours after the thing reſolved upon. This was the reſolttion of Job; Job xxxi. 1. *I made a covenant with mine eyes, why then ſhould I think upon a maid?* As if he had ſaid, *I have reſolved and made a covenant with myſelf, as much as in me lies, to avoid all temptations of ſin, why then ſhould I run myſelf into Temptation?* Pſalm xxxix. 3. *I ſaid, I will take heed to my ways, that I offend not with my tongue, I will keep my mouth with a Bridle.*

2. This ſettled and firm reſolution is neceſſary to repentance. A man may do many things in order to a work of converſion, yet if he has not a ſettled and firm reſolution to turn to God, he might as well do nothing; but when once a man comes to ſet to a ſettled, firm, ſincere and hearty reſolution to leave fully and wholly to the Lord, and to reſign to all the faculties of his ſoul to him, then the

work is more than half done. All the other duties of chriſtianity will ſeem eaſy and pleaſant. *David* reſolved and ſwore, and therefore he would perform: *I have ſworn*, ſaith he, *and therefore will perform, that I will keep thy ſtatutes*, Pſ. cxix. 106.

Thus much for the doctrinal part: I ſhall be very ſhort in the application.

There is but one uſe that I ſhall make of this point, and that ſhall be a uſe of exhortation: it is ſo, that whatever the people of *Iſrael* did *Joſhua* was reſolved that he and his houſe would ſerve the Lord.

In the firſt place, make a firm reſolution, to give up yourſelves to the Lord and his ſervice; let the men of this world do what they pleaſe, if they will not be reformed, let them take their courſe; if they are ſo in love with hell and damnation, ſo that they will run headlong thither, let them take their courſe.

But my dear friends, into whoſe hands this little book ſhall come, do you ſincerely reſolve to give yourſelves up to the Lord, and his ſervice; if others will be for hell, do you reſolve to be for heaven; whatever it coſt you reſolve to cleave cloſe to the Lord, in oppoſition to the malice of the devil; the enticements of the fleſh, & the temptations of this wicked world. If wicked men ſhould entice & ſeek to draw you into ſin with them, do not yield, but rather anſwer them as *Joſeph* did his miſtreſs, *How can I do this great wickedneſs and ſin againſt God?* Gen. xxxix. 9. If at any time any of your old ſinful companions do entice, perſuade, and intreat you to go with them to drinking, gaming, or any other vile exerciſes, reſolve with yourſelves never to yield to any of their perſuading arguments; labour to obey the counſel of *Solomon*; *My ſon, if ſinners entice thee, conſent thou not.*

Reſolve to take Chriſt in all his offices, in all his

inconvenience

inconveniences, reſolve to run all hazards with him; be exhorted now, without delay to bid an everlaſting farewel to all your ſins; and from henceforth make a firm covenant with thy body and ſoul to be his, ſaying, Lord, I do here lament, and am heartily grieved that I have ſpent ſo much of my time in rebellion againſt thee, and in chuſing the ways of ſin, but I do here, from this time forward, firmly reſolve to bid an utter defiance to all ſin, & through thy grace enabling me now to covenant with thee to be thine, and to forſake all that is near and dear unto me in this world, for thy ſake; I am reſolved never more to yield myſelf ſervant to ſin and ſatan, but to watch againſt all temptations whether of proſperity or adverſity, and I do reſolve to take thee for my portion and happineſs, promiſing and vowing to ſerve thee in holineſs and righteouſneſs all the days of my life; and I do here fully reſolve to chooſe Jeſus Chriſt as the way to the Father, and to take my lot with, and to run all hazards with him, reſting upon him alone, in his way for ſalvation.

Secondly, Reſolve not only to give up yourſelves to the Lord, but reſolve to uſe your utmoſt endeavours, that all under your charge may likewiſe ſerve the Lord: *Joſhua* did not only reſolve to ſerve the Lord himſelf, but he reſolved both he and his ſhould ſerve the Lord.

For my part I have been in many families, but I never met with but here and there one, where the worſhip of God and religious exerciſes has been ſet amongſt them. I may ſpeak it with ſhame enough; for they never regarded what became of their immortal Souls.

Truly, friends, I am apt to think that there being ſuch a multitude of prophane, irreligious families among us in *England*, is a forerunner of ſome ſad judgment approaching; for, if the ſcripture be

the true word of God, ſo indeed we muſt expect ſome ſad calamity to befal us e're long, if there be not a ſpeedy reformation in houſes and families. See what a threatning there lies in the word of God againſt ſuch, Jer. x. 25. *That the Lord will pour out his fury upon the heathen that know him not, and upon the nations that call not upon his name.* By heathen here is meant, all ungodly, irreligious families. Let us, the people of this land, have a care that this ſentence be not pronounced againſt us. Many of late have complained of the badneſs of the times. that trading is dead, money is ſcarce, and every thing is dear. But, friends, let there be a thought of reformation in houſes and families, and then you will ſoon ſee as peaceable and happy times as ever were known ſince *England* has been inhabited. But if people will ſtill remain to be irreligious and prophane in their families, I am afraid that ſome worſe judgments will befall us than ever yet we have ſeen: how can we expect deliverance from our enemies, and happy times, whilſt the worſhip of God is ſo much neglected, and family duties never regarded?

To conclude: You that are parents, maſters, and houſholders, if ever you deſire your own good, and a bleſſing upon your families & undertakings, and the good of this nation, be entreated now to hear the word of exhortation; be exhorted now, no longer to neglect the worſhip and ſervice of God in your families, but as often as you ſee your ſervants and children ſin againſt God, reprove them, and when you ſee them ignorant, inſtruct them.

Let me council you to do this at convenient opportunities, to catechiſe your children and ſervants, at leaſt once every week, and inſtruct them in the principles of religion: every Lord's day in the morning, call them earlier than you do on other days; and as ſoon as they have done their neceſſary buſi-

neſs,

neſs, before you go with them to the public worſhip of God, read to them ſome private inſtruction concerning what they have read, and call upon them to read ſome of God's word, and then join with them in prayer; and after public worſhip call every one of them to an account, concerning the ſermon they heard, and ſtir up their memories with it, and edify them as much as you can with thoſe good inſtructions, which the preacher has delivered out of the word of God, and then inſtruct them in the principles of religion: And conclude the evening of the Lord's day in reading, and godly conferences, ſinging of pſalms, and praying: and every morning in the week, call your children and ſervants together, and pray with them, before they and you go about the works of your calling: and let godly conference and prayer be every evening's exerciſe, before you go to reſt; and make a firm and ſtrong reſolution, as *Joſhua* did here, that let others ſerve whom they will you'll ſerve the *Lord God of Iſrael*, ſaying, *as for me and my houſe we will ſerve the Lord.*

A Prayer for a Family.

O Moſt gracious and ever bleſſed Lord God, who art perfect in holineſs, and infinite in all thy perfections, look down from heaven we beſeech thee with an eye of pity and compaſſion upon thine unworthy ſervants, ſinful duſt and aſhes; who deſire at this time with all reverence and humility to addreſs ourſelves unto thee, to offer unto thee our petitions and requeſts in thy ſon's name; for Lord, we confeſs, that we are conceived and born in ſin, and brought into this world a ſtock of original corruption, which we have derived from our firſt parents actual tranſgreſſions; and if that were not enough to make us miſerable for ever, we have gone on all our lives in a courſe of actual rebellion againſt thee; we are naturally prone to all manner of evil, but we are backward and averſe to any thing that is good: Lord, we confeſs, as we have grown in years, ſo we have increaſed in all manner of evil, but we are backward and averſe to any thing that is good; Lord, we confeſs as we have grown in years, ſo we have increaſed in all manner of ſin and ungodlineſs, ſo that we have abuſed thy goodneſs, which ſhould have led us to repentance; we have run wilfully into ſin againſt the light of our knowledge, againſt the dictates of our own conſciences, we have grieved thy ſpirit, wearied thy patience, and turned a deaf ear to thy heavenly calls, and ſlighted thy offers of grace and mercy thro' Jeſus Chriſt. Ah! vile wretches that we are, we have lived as if thou didſt ſend us into the world for nothing but to gratify the fleſh, and pleaſe our ſenſual appetites; and we have forgot thoſe high and holy ends, which thou haſt made for us, which

is to live to thy praiſe and glory; how often haſt thou ſtood knocking at the door of our hard hearts for entrance, but we have barred them up againſt thee by impenitency and unbelief? If thou, Lord, ſhould deal with us according to our deſerts, what can we expect at thy hands but wrath and our everlaſting condemnation? But, Lord, thou haſt out of thy unſpeakable love towards mankind, ſent thy dear ſon into the world to be a propitiation for our ſins, and by his ſufferings and death to take away the ſins of the world: We humbly pray thee for his ſake, and for the bitter death and bloody paſſion's ſake, which we believe he hath ſuffered for us, that thou would'ſt pardon and forgive us all our ſins: blot them we beſeech thee out of the book of thy remembrance, nail them to his croſs, and bury them in his grave, that they may never riſe up againſt us, ſhame and confound us in this world, or condemn us for ever in the world to come: and to this end, Lord, we humbly pray thee, that thou would'ſt give us a true and lively faith in his merits: O let not this be an aggravation of our condemnation, that we have wilfully rejected him; but grant, Lord, that we may receive and embrace him upon ſuch terms as he has offered to us in the goſpel. O let Chriſt be precious in our eyes, yea more precious than gold or ſilver; and grant that we may eſteem all the riches, and all the pleaſures of this world, to be but as droſs and dung in compariſon of Chriſt; for what ſhall it profit us if we ſhould gain all the riches, and all the pleaſures of the world, and at laſt loſe Chriſt and our immortal ſouls? And how miſerable will our condition be, if we ſhould die in a Chriſtleſs ſtate? Lord, we pray thee unite us to Chriſt by faith, that he may be one with us; and wean our hearts, we beſeech thee, from the love of all earthly things, continually to live and converſe with thee above, while we walk

and act here upon earth. And Lord, we humbly beg of thee, that thou would'ſt work in us a godly ſorrow for all our ſins paſt; let it heartily repent us, that we ſhould ever be ſo vile as to offend ſo good and gracious a God as thou art; grant, Lord, that we may put the knife of mortification to the throat of our beloved luſts: grant that we may learn to cut off our right-hand ſins, and pluck out our right-eye ſins. O that thou wouldeſt be pleaſed to give us a new birth, and make holineſs to be natural to us: mollify we beſeech thee our hard hearts, & write thy laws upon them: change, we beſeech thee, our natures, renew our wills, and conform them to thy holy and heavenly will; and grant us the guidance and aſſiſtance of thy holy ſpirit, that we may yield hearty and ſincere obedience to thy will; let us not any longer allow ourſelves in the omiſſion of any known duty; and grant that we may henceforth fight againſt ſin, and reſiſt all the temptations of the devil, the fleſh, and the world, that ſin more and more dying and declining in us, grace and holineſs may more and more grow and increaſe in us, that going on from one degree of grace to another, at laſt we may be perfected and completed in glory. And, Lord, we humbly pray thee, that thou would'ſt look with an eye of pity and compaſſion upon this ſinful nation unto which we belong. We muſt confeſs we have been a diſobedient and gainſaying people; thy mercies would never win us, nor yet thy judgments awaken us, nor none of thy acts of providence would any ways work upon us, but we have gone on obſtinately in our rebellion againſt thee, ſo that thou mighteſt e'er this time have juſtly delivered us up a prey to our enemies. Bleſs, we beſeech thee, the king's majeſty both at home and abroad, and give him victory and ſucceſs over all his enemies: bring to nought we beſeech thee, thoſe plots and conſpiracies which are contrived againſt thy glory, and good of thy church: give him, we beſeech thee,

long and proſperous reign over us on earth, and at laſt crown him with everlaſting glory in the life to come. Conſider, we beſeech thee, all ſuch as ſuffer any kind of affliction, whether of body or mind: ſanctify, we beſeech thee, the affliction unto them, that they may work for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory: And as thou haſt hitherto preſerved us from our infancy unto this preſent day and hour, ſo we beſeech thee, continue thy care over us, by thy divine providence, & command thy holy angels to pitch their tents round about us, for our defence and ſafety. Bleſs us, we beſeech thee, both in our going out and coming in, both in our lying down and riſing, that whether we ſleep or wake, live or die, we may always be thine. Lord, we pray thee, make us ſo wiſe that we may know and conſider, in this our day of viſitation, thoſe things which concern our everlaſting peace, before they are hid from our eyes; and grant that we live every day as if it were our laſt day, and ſo order our thoughts words and actions, that we may give up our account at laſt with joy, and inherit everlaſting life. Theſe bleſſings, and whatſoever thou knoweſt requiſite and neceſſary for us, we humbly beg and crave at thy hands, upon the account, and through the mercies of Jeſus Chriſt, our Lord and only Saviour; in whoſe name and words we further call upon thee, as himſelf hath taught us, ſaying, *Our Father*, &c.

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Plain Way to HEAVEN.

Matt. xix. 16. *Good Maſter what ſhall I do to inherit eternal Life?*

THE reaſon why I give theſe directions, is, becauſe ſo many thouſands flock to hell, when they verily think they are going the way to heaven: And others go ſecurely on in their ſins, running on in all kind of wickedneſs, not conſidering what will become of them, until they drop into hell.

Firſt, I will give you a ſhort hint of the dreadful ſtate of the wicked, and of the joyful ſtate of the godly; with ſome directions in order to your ſalvation.

Conſider, firſt, all you that continue in your ſin, and will not be perſuaded to repent, and lead a new life, how dreadful your ſtate will be at laſt; for as long as you remain in your unconverted ſtate, God and you are enemies, you are under his wrath and curſe; you are ſlaves to the devil: And beſides all this, you are in danger every hour of dropping into hell, for you know not how ſuddenly death may ſeize upon you: And then if you are unprepared, you ſhall be hauled by the devils down to hell, where you ſhall be kept in chains and darkneſs, until the dreadful judgment of the great day, when your bodies ſhall be raiſed to life again, and be ſummoned before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt, where you ſhall give a ſtrict account of all things that you have thought, done, or ſpoken in your life-time; there you ſhall ſtand trembling before your offended judge, expecting that doleful ſentence to be pronounced againſt you, *Depart from me, ye accurſed, into everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.*

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No ſooner is this dreadful ſentence paſt, but away you muſt be gone, away you will be hauled by the devils, with the reſt of your damned crew, down into the lake that burns with fire and brimſtone, and never have eaſe nor end.

But, on the other ſide, conſider how happy your conditions will be, if you in time repent, and forſake your ſins, and become new creatures; that then God will be your father, Chriſt will be your brother, and the ſpirit will be your comforter: You ſhall be filled with the joys of the Holy Ghoſt, which a thouſand times ſurpaſſeth all worldly joys, and you ſhall have the free and full pardon of your ſins, ſo that they ſhall be remembered no more.

And beſides all this, whenſoever death comes, whether ſooner or later, you ſhall be ſure of heaven, and at your laſt gaſp the angels ſhall carry your ſoul, as they did the ſoul of *Lazarus*, into the kingdom of heaven. And as for your body, that ſhall be laid in the grave, as in the bed of Chriſt, there to reſt until the glorious morning of the reſurrection; and then your bodies ſhall be raiſed again, and faſhioned like unto the glorious body of Chriſt; and ſoul and body being then re-united, you ſhall be openly acknowledged, and hear that comfortable ſentence pronounced unto you, *Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the kingdom which was prepared for you from the beginning of the world.* Then you ſhall be received with rejoicing and triumphing into the heaven of heavens, and the place of joy and bliſs. There you ſhall be ſtripped of all your robes of mortality, & be clothed in immortality: then you ſhall ſit down to reſt with *Abraham, Iſaac, & Jacob*, in the kingdom of heaven. There you ſhall poſſeſs ſuch divine treaſure, ſuch rare joys, yea, variety of joys, and ſuch ſweet delights as no mortal eye hath ever ſeen, no mortal ear hath ever heard, nor can it enter into the heart

to conceive, what joys and delights God hath prepared for you in heaven. Then ſhall you be for ever free from all kind of ſin and ſorrow: *There ſhall be no more death, neither ſorrow, nor crying, neither ſhall there be any more pain; for the former things are paſſed away, and God ſhall wipe away all tears from your eyes*, Rev. xix. 4. There ſhall be life without death, health without ſickneſs, and pleaſure without pain; as you ſhall be free from all evil, ſo you ſhall enjoy all the good that can be enjoyed: There you ſhall rejoice one with another, and with one heart and with one voice ſhall there ſing praiſes and hallelujahs to God, and to the Lamb that ſits upon the throne for ever and ever.

And now, I hope, you are ready to aſk, What ſhall we do, that we may eſcape everlaſting torments and get ſafe to heaven? And begin to be pricked at the heart, and are ready to ſay, What ſhall we do to be ſaved?

Anſ. If it be ſo that you earneſtly deſire to know the way to heaven, and are willing to walk in that way; then, as I in my little book of young ones gave *nine directions*, what they ſhall do to eſcape hell and attain heaven; ſo here I will give you ſome directions, *what you ſhall do to be ſaved*; and inſtead of many, I will only give you theſe two: that is *(repent, and believe the goſpel)* follow thoſe two directions, and you are in the right way to heaven: The law indeed requires perfect obedience; but no mere man ſince the fall is able perfectly to keep the commandments of God, and by the works of the law can never be ſaved.

God has by Chriſt our redeemer required *faith and repentance* as the condition of the goſpel, by which eternal life is to be had. *Faith and repentance* is all that God requires, in order to our ſalvation; *Repent, and believe the goſpel*, and you ſhall certainly

certainly be ſaved. I will give you as plain directions, as poſſibly I can, how you ſhall attain theſe two graces.

Firſt, For repentance. You muſt know that there are two kinds of repentance; there is a falſe repentance, and a true repentance.

A falſe repentance, is that which a man is driven to, thro' fear of hell and damnation; when a wicked man lies upon his death-bed, then he ſeems to be ſorry for his ſins paſt, and makes many fair promiſes of a new life: if it ſhould pleaſe God to reſtore him to his former health, he follows his old courſe again. Now this kind of repentance can never be effectual to ſalvation.

II. How you muſt mind what true repentance is.

True repentance is a ſaving grace, whereby a ſinner, out of a true ſenſe of his ſin; and apprehenſion of the mercy of God in Chriſt, doth with grief and hatred of his ſin turn from it unto God, with full purpoſe of, and endeavouring after, new obedience.

But now ſeeing without this repentance there is no getting to heaven, and that we cannot repent of ourſelves, it is of God's free gift; I will therefore give you ſome plain directions how repentance may be had, and how to go through with it; for though we cannot repent of ourſelves, yet if we do not repent, the fault lies upon us.

1. The firſt ſtep to true repentance, is the examination of yourſelves; try your hearts, and ſearch into your former lives, how, and after what manner you have ſpent your time ſince you have been a child; and to this end, I counſel you to make a catalogue of all your ſins you can poſſible call to mind; for which purpoſe you muſt take the ten commandments for your pattern.

2. The ſecond ſtep to true repentance, is the confeſſion of theſe ſins you have thus found out:

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You muſt ſpread them all before the Lord, and confeſs them all in particular with all circumſtances, as the time when, place where, and manner how ſuch and ſuch things were committed. Now many confeſs in general, they are ſinners, but few confeſs their ſins. And if your ſins are ſo innumerable, that you cannot find out every particular, then confeſs the reſt in general; and there is no doubt but God will take it for a true and ſincere confeſſion, in that there is no known ſin that you would willingly hide from God.

3. Another ſtep of true repentance is godly ſorrow for thoſe ſins ſo confeſſed: And it is godly ſorrow that works repentance unto ſalvation, never to be repented of. Now for the obtaining this godly ſorrow, you muſt uſe theſe means.

1. Lay to heart how good and how merciful God hath been to you: how many tokens of his love and kindneſs he hath beſtowed upon you, and yet how ill you have repaid him. Seriouſly conſider how he hath delivered you from ſuch and ſuch enemies: That notwithſtanding your many provocations, yet he hath borne with you all this while: He hath patience with you, and waits for your repentance, who might in juſtice have ſnatched you away, whilſt you were ſinning, & ſent you quick to everlaſting burnings; yet ſtill he ſpared you; yet he gives you every day freſh ſupplies of his mercy: And as before you were to make a catalogue of your ſins, ſo here make a catalogue of God's mercies, thoſe ſeveral kinds of mercies and favours you have received from him, and then lay to heart what a baſe and unthankful wretch you have been, thus to provoke and grieve ſo good and merciful a God. Think thus with yourſelf, *O that I ſhould be ſuch a baſe vile wretch, for to provoke and grieve ſo long, a father that has been ſo good and gracious unto me! So merciful a Saviour, that died for me!*

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Such conſiderations, deeply laid to heart, will prick your heart into godly ſorrow for your ſins; as *Peter*, when he conſidered how he denied Chriſt, *went out and wept bitterly*, Mat. xxvi. 75.

2. Keep in mind moſt of thoſe ſins whereby you have moſt diſhonour'd God & griev'd his ſpirit: This alſo will be a means to work in you godly ſorrow.

3. Ply the throne of grace, by earneſt and conſtant prayer, that God may take away that ſtony heart out of your fleſh, and give you a heart of fleſh, as he hath promiſed, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 36. But it may be, God will not ſeem to hear your prayers preſently, if therefore you cannot find your heart relent the firſt time, go and pray again, and give God no reſt till he hear; and then for certain, one time or other, God will melt your hearts into godly ſorrow and remorſe for your former ſins; and then this excellent grace of repentance is begun and wrought in you.

4. The next thing that is to be done is this, *beg heartily to God for the pardon of your former ſins, that they may be caſt behind his back, that they may be waſhed away in the blood of Chriſt.*

And then laſtly make a firm, ſtrong, and ſettled reſolution henceforth to lead a new life; this muſt not be a weak reſolution, but it muſt be a ſettled, a deliberate reſolution. Now when a man ſeriouſly conſiders, that except he becomes a new creature, he cannot be ſaved, and he therefore takes up a ſtrong and fixed reſolution henceforth to lead a new life, the work is more than half done; that man is not far from the kingdom of heaven.

Thus far the act of repentance: Now I will give ſome helps for the daily renewing of your repentance.

1. Every morning as ſoon as you riſe, proſtrate yourſelf before the throne of grace, and earneſtly beg for God's aſſiſting grace, to keep you from falling

ſing into any kind of ſin that day; for after a man is regenerated, he is yet daily liable to fall into any ſin, without the aſſiſtance of God's ſpecial grace.

2. When you have thus done, then go about the works of your calling; but ſet a ſtrict and continual watch over your heart and all your ſenſes. And as often as the devil doth tempt you to any kind of ſin, or doth offer you any bait, then immediately lift up your heart to God, by ejaculatory prayer, as thus, "Lord vanquiſh ſatan at this time, that he do not overcome me: Lord preſerve me this once from falling into ſin: Lord have mercy on my ſoul, and ſtrengthen me againſt this temptation of the devil, that I be not overcome." And if wicked men at any time ſeek to draw you into ſin, make a firm reſolution within yourſelf never to conſent, and as much as poſſibly you can, keep yourſelf from the company of wicked men. This is the firſt ſtep in your way to heaven, *Repentance*.

The ſecond is *Faith*: As I firſt directed you to *Repent*, ſo ſecondly, *Believe the Goſpel*.

Now faith is a ſaving grace, whereby we receive and reſt upon Chriſt alone for ſalvation as he is freely offered to us in the goſpel. Now, ſeeing a true ſaving faith is not in our power, but it is the gift of God, and God always beſtows it upon thoſe that uſes the means which he hath preſcribed in his word for obtaining of it: I ſhall therefore give you ſome directions what you ſhall do to have this grace of faith wrought in you.

1. Be diligent in reading the ſcriptures: firſt, you muſt every morning and evening read a chapter in your bible, or elſe ſome part of a godly ſermon; and when you read you muſt not run it over, and then leave it; you had as good do nothing as to do ſo: but when you read, you muſt take ſpecial heed what you are reading of.

2. Be fervent and diligent in hearing the word preached,

preached, *For Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*, Rom. x. 17. When you are at church, you muſt hearken with all the attention you can; hearken earneſtly as if you were to die preſently, and go to judgment. And for your help therein, you muſt mark what is the doctrine, what are the reaſons and uſes, and how many they are.

3. Whilſt you are hearing, ſet a reſolution to practice what you hear; and when you come home, call over the heads of the ſermon in your mind, and turn every uſe and direction, that has been delivered, into prayer; pray for God's bleſſing on it, and make it matter of your meditation all the week; and then laſtly, ſet yourſelf to the practice of it.

4. Another method of getting a ſaving faith, is earneſt prayer unto God for it, *Mat.* vii. 7. *Aſk, and you ſhall have; ſeek, and you ſhall find; knock, and it ſhall be opened unto you.* But you will ſay, *it may be God will not accept of my prayers; for God heareth not ſinners, and the prayers of the wicked are an abomination unto him.* I anſwer, it is wilful ſinners that God will not hear, they that pray for mercy and other good things, and yet hate to be reformed, the prayers of ſuch God will not regard; but they that come to God in a returning way, with a full purpoſe to leave their ſin, and pray, and earneſtly deſire grace, eſpecially, this grace of faith, they ſhall certainly be accepted, and have their prayers granted.

Now concerning the act of faith, take but this direction: make a catalogue of all the promiſes, as you did before of your ſins and God's mercies; and then heartily believe and aſſure yourſelves, that every one of thoſe promiſes belong to all thoſe perſons that perform the conditions of thoſe promiſes: and if you perform the condition, then thoſe promiſes belong to you. As for inſtance, I will name this one particular promiſe,

miſe, Mat. xix. 29. *Every one that hath forſaken houſes, or brethren, or ſiſter, or father or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my ſake, ſhall receive an hundred fold, and ſhall inherit everlaſting life.*

Which God of his infinite mercy grant unto us all. Amen.

End of the Sixth SERMON.

THE

THE Future State of Man: OR, A TREATISE ON THE *RESURRECTION.*

In a FUNERAL SERMON.

JOHN v, 28, 29. *Marvel not at this, the hour is coming, wherein all that are in their graves ſhall hear his voice, and come forth; they that have done good unto the reſurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the reſurrection of damnation.*

OUR bleſſed Saviour in theſe words ſets forth unto us the ſtate and condition of all men at the laſt day; for as ſin hath brought death into the world, and nothing is more certain than death, ſo nothing is more certain than that our bodies muſt one day be raiſed again from the duſt of the earth. All other creatures, which move upon the earth, whenſoever they die, there is an end of them, they ſhall never come in being more. But with man it is otherwiſe, God hath endowed man with an immortal ſoul, that ſhall never die; a beginning a man has,

has, but he ſhall never have an end: when death comes, his ſoul ſhall for ſome certain ſpace of time be ſeparated from his body, laid awhile to reſt in the duſt of the earth: *But at laſt the trumpet will ſound, and all that are in their graves ſhall hear his voice and come forth; they that have done good unto the reſurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the reſurrection of damnation.*

The doctrine which I ſhall raiſe from hence is this: That all mankind, both good and bad, ſhall at the ſound of the laſt trumpet be raiſed again from the duſt of the earth.

Now my method ſhall be this.

1. To prove, that there ſhall be a reſurrection.

2. Of the perſons that ſhall be raiſed; that is, *All that are in the graves.*

3. By what means the dead ſhall be raiſed, that is, *by the ſound of the trumpet, they ſhall hear the voice, and ſhall come forth.*

4. The different ſtate and condition of all men at the reſurrection: *They that have done good unto the reſurrection of life, but they that have done evil, to the reſurrection of damnation.*

5. And laſtly, to convince us all by way of application of the drawing on of this time, and therefore that we muſt not marvel at it: *Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming,* &c.

1. To prove there ſhall be a reſurrection, which I ſhall do; firſt from the ſcripture, which is the true and infallible word of God; to inſtance in ſome few places, as *Iſ.* xxvi. 15. alſo 1 *Cor.* xv. where you have a large deſcription of the reſurrection: Alſo, *Acts* xxiv. 15. *And have hope toward God, which they themſelves alſo allow, that there ſhall be a reſurrection both of the juſt and unjuſt.* Likewiſe *Dan.* xii. 2. *Many that are aſleep in the duſt, ſhall awake, ſome to everlaſting life, and ſome to ſhame and everlaſting contempt.* Alſo *Hoſea* iii. 14. God has

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there promiſed redemption from death, to ranſom them from the power of the grave.

2. Now if we would believe the ſcripture we muſt believe the reſurrection of the body; for the word of God is true and faithful, and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath ſaid in his goſpel, *That heaven and earth ſhall paſs away, before one jot or tittle of his word ſhall fall to the ground*, Mat. v. And beſides all this, thoſe ſcripture-promiſes, which have been already fulfilled in all the ages of the world, may aſſure us of the accompliſhment of this one promiſe, *That our bodies ſhall be raiſed at the laſt day from the duſt of the earth. And this is my father's will*, ſaith Chriſt, that *of all that the father hath given me, I ſhould loſe nothing, but ſhall raiſe it up again at the laſt day*, John vi. 30.

3. That there ſhall be a reſurrection of the body, may be proved, not only from the ſcripture, but alſo from nature itſelf: the reſurrection is proved from nature, as we may ſee in Iſ. xxvi. 19. *The dead men ſhall live, together with my dead body ſhall they ariſe; awake and ſing, ye that dwell in the duſt, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth ſhall caſt out her dead. Thy dew is as the dew of herbs*, intimates to us thus much, That as the herbs and plants ſeem to be dead and withered all the winter, yet in the ſpring they revive, and come forth freſh and green; and as in the night, the ſun is withdrawn, and the day ſeems to be buried in the ſilent night, ſo in the morning the ſun riſeth as bright as ever, and enliveneth the world with his glorious beams; ſo it is here, tho' the bodies of men and women ſeem for a time to be loſt, and turned to duſt and corruption, yet in the glorious morning of the reſurrection they ſhall be raiſed to life, and revive to an immortal ſtate.

4. That there ſhall be a reſurrection of the body, may be proved alſo by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt;

Chriſt; that as our Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſuffered, died, and was buried, that by his death he might redeem us from ſin and hell, ſo he roſe again, that by the virtue of his reſurrection he might redeem us again from death and the grave: The apoſtle makes the reſurrection of Chriſt the foundation of our redemption, as you may ſee, 1 *Cor.* xv. 12. *Now if Chriſt be preached that he aroſe from the dead, how ſay ſome of you that there is no reſurrection of the dead?* Now there were ſome that did not believe that there was any reſurrection of the dead; and this their incredulity and unbelief the apoſtle cenſures, and proves that there ſhall be a reſurrection; and that from the doctrine of Chriſt's reſurrection, intimating, that if Chriſt be riſen from the dead, as he preached that he is riſen, then it needs muſt follow, that there muſt be a reſurrection of all men from the grave. Now theſe people that held ſtrong that opinion, that there ſhall be no reſurrection of the dead; yet theſe ſame men did preach that Chriſt was raiſed; but the Apoſtle tells them plainly, *That if it be ſo that there is no reſurrection of the dead, then Chriſt is not riſen.* And if Chriſt be not riſen, he tells them what a ſad condition we are in: for *all our preaching, praying, and all we do and ſuffer for Chriſt, is in vain,* v. 14. but in verſe 20. the apoſtle reconciles both arguments together; *But now Chriſt is riſen from the dead, and become the firſt fruits of them that ſlept:* ſo that here the apoſtle aſſures them, that Chriſt is riſen from the dead, and by the virtue and power of his reſurrection all mankind ſhall one day be raiſed from the grave. And beſides, we read in *Matt.* xxvii. that at the reſurrection of Chriſt, *the graves opened, and many of the bodies of the ſaints which ſlept aroſe out of their graves:* which is an earneſt to us, that by the ſame virtue and power all the bodies of men and women, that are, and ever have been, and

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ever have been, and ever ſhall be to the world's end, ſhall be raiſed again at the laſt day.

5. That there ſhall be a reſurrection of the body, is an article of our faith; therefore, we cannot deny the reſurrection, except we remove our belief, and deny our chriſtianity itſelf; this was an article of the apoſtles faith, *Acts* xxiv. 15. *And have hope towards God, which themſelves allow, that there ſhall be a reſurrection of the dead, both of the juſt and of the unjuſt.*

But it may be, ſome will object and ſay, *How can it be that all the dead can be raiſed, for many are drowned in the ſea, and their carcaſes are eaten up by fiſhes, and many men have been burnt to aſhes, and their aſhes mingled among the duſt of the earth, and ſcattered up and down, no body knows where?*

To this I anſwer, that to man, indeed, this is impoſſible to be; but if God be infinite in his wiſdom and power, as indeed he is, then he makes the duſt of every man, woman and child, and by his all wiſe providence knows what duſt belongs to ſuch and ſuch a body; wherever it is ſcattered.

Friends, here will be a declaration of infinite power! For know this, he that by his power made all things out of nothing, can as eaſily by the ſame power raiſe our bodies again out of ſomething, even out of their own ſubſtance or matter.

Thus I have ſufficiently proved, that there will be a reſurrection of the dead.

2. The ſecond thing to be conſidered from the text is the number of the dead which ſhall be raiſed; that is, all, for ſo faith our Lord and Saviour here in the text; *The hour is coming wherein all that are in their graves ſhall hear his voice,* &c. All, that is, all the ſons and daughters of *Adam*, that have ever lived ſince the world began, and all that ever ſhall live and die to the end thereof; all muſt riſe and make their appearance at the laſt day; St.

John declares in his vision, *Rev.* xx. 12. *That he saw the dead both great and small stand before God.* By small and great, we are not to understand the phrase in respect to stature, as if some shall appear grown men, and some children; we must all appear then in the stature and fulness of Christ, that is, of a middle stature, or that stature *Adam* was created in, which was of a middle stature; the oldest shall appear no older, and the youngest no younger; but by small and great we are to understand,

First, Those that died of all ages, from the oldest, to the child that is still-born.

Secondly, by small and great, we are to understand all states and degrees of men and women, both high and low, rich and poor, noble and ignoble; all sorts and states of men must then make their appearance, from the king on the throne, to the beggar on the dunghill; and ver. 13. St *John* did see in his vision, *That the sea gave up her dead: and death and hell*, that is the earth and the grave, *cast up their dead and all were judged according to their works.* All the elements at the call of Christ must give up their dead; all that the fire hath consumed and burnt to ashes, all that ever have been buried in the sea, and all that have been buried in the earth, as soon as the last trumpet sounds they must all come forth, none shall be so great as to escape, and none shall be so small as to be forgotten. Oh! what a great, what a vast assembly will there be, when all the sons and daughters of *Adam* shall meet together; To see an army of men together, we think, it is a great sight. If all the men and women in *Great Britain* were to meet together at one place what a great, what an invincible great assembly would there seem to be: But alas! what is *Great Britain* to the whole world, it is counted but a garden plat to other nations. And what is the whole world now living, in respect of all ages

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that are paſt and to come! All the *Iſraelites* of old which were counted as the ſands in the ſea, they were ſo innumerable; and beſides them, ſo many millions of millions that have been ſlain in the wars, ſo many thouſands that have been ſwallowed up in earthquakes, ſo many thouſands of millions of millions that have died by the peſtilence and all other mortal diſtempers, in all ages of the world, and all that have died naturally in infancy, in youth, middle age, and old age, and all that are now living and that ſhall live to the world's end; when all theſe ſhall meet together at the general reſurrection; O what a wonderful meeting will there be! *We muſt all appear before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt*, ſaith the apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* v. 10.

Friends, both you that read this treatiſe, and I who write, we muſt all make our appearance there, all that are in their graves muſt hear his voice, and come forth.

Thirdly, The third thing to be conſidered is this, by what means all the dead ſhall be raiſed; that is, by the ſound of the laſt trumpet; for ſo ſaith our Saviour in the text, *All that are in their graves ſhall hear his voice and come forth*: and what voice this is that the dead ſhall hear, you may ſee in 1 Cor. xv. 52. that is, the ſound of the laſt trumpet, *For the trumpet ſhall ſound, and the dead ſhall be raiſed*: and who that is, which ſhall ſound this trumpet, you may ſee in 1. Theſſ. iv. 15, 16. *For this we ſay unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, ſhall not prevent them that are aſleep, for the Lord himſelf ſhall deſcend from heaven with a ſhout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God.*

So that you ſee this trumpet ſhall be ſounded by an archangel: So Mat. xxiv. 30, 31. *They ſhall ſee the ſon of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, and he ſhall ſend his angels*

with a great ſound of a trumpet, and they ſhall gather together his elect from the four winds; from one end of heaven to the other.

Thus we ſee by what means the dead ſhall be raiſed: that is, by the voice of the arch-angel, by the ſound of the laſt trumpet, which voice ſhall be uttered more loud and ſhrill than thunder, uttering theſe words, *Ariſe ye dead, and come to judgment.* Now a few verſes before the text, ver. 25. we have another voice that is ſounding in the ears, *The hour is coming and now is, that the dead ſhall hear the voice of the ſon of God, and they that hear, ſhall live.* Now theſe two voices, that of the text, and ver. 25. tho' they ſeem to be alike in ſound, yet they differ much; and that in theſe two reſpects:

1. Firſt in reſpect of time: that voice ſpoken of in ver. 25. is uttered in the preſent tenſe, *the hour is coming, now is,* &c. But that voice ſpoken of in the text, is ſpoken of altogether in the future tenſe, *the hour is coming,* mark, there is no *now it is,* but *it is* a time that is come.

2. There is a great difference betwixt theſe two voices, and that is in reſpect of the ſenſe and meaning of the words, for thoſe of the firſt voice are gracious and inviting words, which are interpreted by divines after this manner: *Ariſe ye dead, and come to judgment.* That is, thoſe that are dead in their ſins, and rotting and ſtinking in the grave of their luſts: Now theſe are under the call of the goſpel, and they that hearken to this call, and obey his voice, and ſo come to Jeſus Chriſt, by a true and lively faith, and unfeigned repentance, they ſhall by Chriſt obtain everlaſting life. But whether they will hear his voice, or whether they will ſtop their ears againſt it; yet let them know there is another voice, which ſhall be uttered to the world, which is a voice of power; and that voice they muſt hear, whether

whether they will or no, *Ariſe, ye dead, and come to judgment.*

Conſider, friends, tho' you now ſtop your ears, and will not hear the ſound of the trumpet of the goſpel; ye know this, there is another trumpet, which will one day ſound, calling all the dead out of their graves, ſaying, *Ariſe, ye dead, and come to judgment*; and whenever this laſt trumpet ſounds, you muſt hear it whether you will or no; the depth of the grave ſhall not hinder the ſound, no nor the depth of the ſea ſhall hinder it.

He that could at firſt command all things out of nothing by the word of his power, ſo at the laſt day he will but ſpeak the word, and the dead ſhall riſe and make their appearance before the tribunal ſeat of Chriſt.

The ſound of this laſt trumpet ſhall be ſo loud, that it ſhall be heard all over the world, it ſhall pierce even to the bottom of the ſea; and to the bowels of the earth: No ſooner is this trumpet ſounded, but the ſound ſhall be obeyed; no ſooner is the voice uttered, *Ariſe, ye dead, and come to judgment*, but immediately the graves in all the church-yards, and in all other places throughout the whole world, ſhall be opened, and the body of every man and woman ſhall be framed out of his own duſt, and bone ſhall be joined to bone, and every part and member ſhall be joined in its place and order; and every ſoul ſhall return to its own body; the ſea ſhall give up their dead; and the fire, and earth ſhall give up their dead, and then immediately they ſhall be all gathered together, even to the valley of *Jehoſhaphat*, to be preſented before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt; as you may ſee, *Joel* iii. 12. For Chriſt ſays, *the hour is coming wherein all that are in their graves ſhall hear his voice, and come forth.*

Fourthly, The fourth thing conſiderable in the text, is the different ſtate and condition of all man-

kind at the reſurrection; that is, *ſome ſhall ariſe to the reſurrection of life, and ſome to the reſurrection of damnation.* Now the different ſtate of good and bad, at the reſurrection, may be conſidered in theſe reſpects:

1. They differ in reſpect of time: For, tho' all mankind ſhall be raiſed from the duſt of the earth, yet they ſhall not be raiſed all at one and the ſame time; there ſhall be two reſurrections, firſt of the ſaints, and then of the wicked. Many there be which affirm that there ſhall be a thouſand years betwixt the reſurrection of the ſaints, and of the wicked; that the ſaints ſhall all riſe at the coming of Chriſt in the clouds, with all his glorious train of heavenly hoſt, and ſhall reign with him a thouſand years upon the earth; and that the reſt of the dead ariſe not until that thouſand years are accompliſhed, *Rev.* xv. 4, 5. Some ſay this means the complete number of a thouſand years: And ſome ſay the meaning of the ſpirit of God here, is not the number of a thouſand years but only a conſiderable ſpace of time: But I will not affirm any thing of that. This we are certain of, that there ſhall be a difference between the reſurrection of the good, and of the bad, in reſpect of time: For St. *Paul* in this caſe, as we may ſee, 1. *Theſſ.* iv. 16. ſaith, *that the dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt:* And if the dead in Chriſt riſe firſt, the reſurrection of the wicked muſt need follow after: And, *Acts* xvi. 15. *There ſhall be a reſurrection both of the juſt and of the unjuſt.* Firſt of the juſt, & then of the unjuſt, but how long a time there ſhall be between, I will not poſitively affirm.

2. There ſhall be a difference between the reſurrection of the good, and of the bad; and that in reſpect of their image and ſhape: *The bodies of the ſaints ſhall be raiſed in glory like unto Chriſt's glorious body;* Phil. iii. 21. ſaith the apoſtle, *who ſhall*

ſhall change our vile bodies, and faſhion them like unto the glorious body of Chriſt. Thus Chriſt himſelf gives us a deſcription of the brightneſs of the ſaints bodies at the reſurrection, *Mat.* xiii. 44. *Then ſhall the righteous ſhine as the ſun in the kingdom of their father.*

The bodies of our firſt parents in their ſtate of innocency were adorned with a glorious beauty and comelineſs. Now this ſhould have been the ſtate and condition of the bodies of all their poſterity, if they had not ſinned; but hath ſtripped us of that glorious beauty and ornament, and without artificial cloathing our bodies are very loathſome and vile; the bodies of the ſaints ſhall be *changed and faſhioned like unto the glorious body of Chriſt.*

But on the other ſide, the bodies of the wicked ſhall at the reſurrection appear more monſtrous, vile, and deformed, than they were before in their ſtate of nature; and beſides the bodies of the ſaints ſhall be delivered from that lumpiſhneſs and heavineſs that they are now clogged with, and inſtead of natural bodies they ſhall be made ſpiritual bodies, 1 *Cor.* xv. 44. and ſhall fly to and fro as ſwift as ſpirits; but as for the wicked, they ſhall be *bound hand and foot, and caſt into utter darkneſs; there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth.* Mat. xxii. 13.

Fifthly and *laſtly.* There ſhall alſo be a vaſt difference betwixt the reſurrection of the good and of the bad, in reſpect of their final ſtate and condition, that they ſhall be raiſed unto; *They that have done good unto the reſurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the reſurrection of damnation.* The good being firſt raiſed, and then immediately after, the reſurrection both of the juſt and of the unjuſt: Then they ſhall be divided one from another, *As a ſhepherd divideth his ſheep from the goats.* Mat. 25. *And he ſhall ſet the ſheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.* At firſt ſhall be pronounced the joyful ſen-

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tence upon the righteous, *come, ye bleſſed of my father, inherit the kingdom:* But the wicked ſhall be ſent away with that doleful ſentence, *depart from me ye curſed, into everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.*

Sixthly and *laſtly*, The laſt thing conſiderable in the text, and that which I intend ſhall be the application of the whole, is the drawing near of the time when the reſurrection ſhall be, therefore our Saviour bids us not marvel at it. There were ſome in our Saviour's time, and ſome there are in our days, that marvel when they hear of the reſurrection of the body, and of a general judgment; they will not believe it: Oh! how ſtrange ſoever they make of it, our bleſſed Saviour aſſures them of it, and tells them it certainly will be. Therefore this doctrine may ſerve to convince us.

Firſt, Of the general reſurrection, and day of judgement: For I have in this diſcourſe proved by ſeveral arguments, that there ſhall be a reſurrection both of the juſt, and of the unjuſt; and as there is nothing more certain than death, ſo there is nothing more certain than a general reſurrection after death.

Secondly. This may convince us, that as there ſhall be a reſurrection: ſo the time when the reſurrection ſhall be, is drawing near; ſo ſaith our Lord Chriſt here himſelf in the text, *marvel not at this, the hour is coming, wherein all that are in the grave ſhall hear his voice, and come forth*; and tho' our bleſſed Saviour tells us, *Mat.* xxiv. *That neither men nor angels know when the time ſhall be*, yet he aſſures us, *That the time is coming*, Acts xvii. 31. We ſee there that God hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world: And this appointed time is drawing near. Do we not ſee the days and nights wheel about apace? Yea, ſo faſt is the time of the general reſurrection coming on; ſo many times as the ſun

ſun has wheeled round the world ſince the creation, ſo many rounds is the thread wound off, and keeps ſtill winding off. It is now above 1700 years ſince our Lord Jeſus Chriſt aſcended into heaven, when the angels ſaid unto the men of *Nazareth*, That *this ſame Jeſus ſhall ſo come again, as you have ſeen him go into heaven*, Acts i. And the time ever ſince has been drawing nearer and nearer: and the time now certainly, cannot be long but that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt will come in the clouds, and then the trumpet will ſound, and the dead ſhall be raiſed, and both quick and dead ſhall make a general appearance.

1. Here is a uſe of reproof to ſuch as take liberty to run on in ſin, putting far from them the evil day: And becauſe the Lord ſeemeth to delay his coming, therefore their hearts are ſet in them to do evil. There were ſome in the apoſtles days, and I fear there are many ſuch in theſe our days, that walk after their own luſt, ſaying, *Where is the promiſe of his coming? For ſince the fathers fell aſleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation*, 2 Pet. iii. 4. But the apoſtle tells them, ver. 9. *That the Lord is not ſlack concerning his promiſe (as ſome men count ſlackneſs) but is long ſuffering towards us, not willing that any ſhould periſh. But the day of the Lord*, whenever it comes, *will come as a thief in the night*, ver. 10. And *when men ſhall ſay peace and ſafety, then ſuddenly cometh deſtruction upon them as travail upon a woman with child, and they ſhall not eſcape.* My friends, pray have a care; for though you think the Lord delayeth his coming, and thereupon you take liberty to yourſelves to fulfil the deſires of the fleſh, yet take heed leaſt the Lord *come in a day when you look not for him, in an hour you are not aware of, and cut you aſunder, and appoint your portion among the hypocrites, where ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth*, Matth. xxiv. 50, 51.

2. A uſe of exhortation; if it be ſo, that the Lord Jeſus Chriſt will certainly come, and ſhortly come, and we muſt all be preſented before him, then how ſhould we live here with all care and circumſpection, that we may be found of him in peace; blameleſs and without ſpot: *How ſhould we labour to be holy in all manner of converſation unto the coming of the day of God?* 1 Peter iii. 11. Let this be a ſtrong motive to move a chriſtian to the duty and obedience, and perſeverance therein. Let the words of St. *James* be as a ſpur to prick you up to be ſtedfaſt, and to hold out in the work of the Lord, *James* v. 8. *Be patient, therefore, brethren; eſtabliſh your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.* And let me exhort you all in the words of our Saviour, *Mark* xiii. 35. *Watch therefore, for ye know not when the time is; and what I ſay unto you, I ſay unto all, watch.* And in the words of the apoſtle, *Heb.* xx. 25. *Exhorting one another ſo much the more as you ſee the day approaching.*

And farther to encourage us in well doing, and to be more diligent, to rebuke, or exhort, to perſuade, and encourage one another in well doing, let us conſider, that we muſt all one day meet together, to be the acquitters, or elſe the condemners of one another; tho' death comes and takes away a wife from a huſband, and a huſband from a wife; tho' it takes away parents from their children, and children from their parents; tho' death comes and makes a breach among relations, neighbours and families, yet let us conſider, that the day of reſurrection will come, and then we ſhall not only ſee and know one another, but we ſhall be able alſo to converſe with one another; but, oh! what a dreadful meeting, we ſhall then have, if we ſhould be forced to be the condemners of one another at that day. The apoſtle tells us, that the ſaints ſhall judge the world at the laſt day. Oh! how

how dreadful will this be, when godly parents ſhall be condemners of their own children, the fruit of their own bowels, thoſe whom they once delighted in, and loved moſt dearly, now to pronounce Chriſt's ſentence againſt them, becauſe they were ſtubborn, wilful, and and would not hearken to their godly counſels and admonitions; I ſay, for godly parents to exalt and applaud Chriſt's ſentence againſt them, when they are condemned to everlaſting fire: Oh! how dreadful will this be! And thus for children to condemn their own parents, becauſe they let them alone in their evil courſes, and would not correct them nor reprove them: and for huſbands and wives, to be the condemnation of one another: Oh! how ſad will this be! Nay conſider farther, that relations, families, neighbours, acquaintances, who ſpend their precious time together in feaſting, drinking, gaming, and other kind of looſe living, muſt meet together and be the condemnation of one another at the laſt day. Oh! what a dreadful meeting will this be! But on the other hand, conſider, that thoſe parents and children, huſbands and wives, families and relations, which would not join with the wicked, but ſpent their time in praying together, and for one another, in exhorting, inſtructing, reproving, and encouraging one another: Oh! what a joyful meeting will theſe have at the reſurrection! Now death many times makes a breach among families and relations: a wife laments for the loſs of her huſband; he laments for the loſs of his wife; the children ſometimes grieve, becauſe they have loſt a loving father, or a dear mother; and the parents grieve and are caſt down, becauſe they have loſt a precious child. But, friends, weep not for your relations as without hope, for they are not loſt, and the morning of the reſurrection will come, the trumpet will ſound, and the dead ſhall riſe, and then you ſhall meet to expreſs the joy you ſhall have

once

one with another to all eternity, if you ſpend your time together in this world, in the works of faith and obedience. And now, to conclude, let us all therefore ſo live, and ſo ſpend our ſhort time here on earth, that in the glorious morning of the reſurrection, when the laſt trumpet ſhall ſound, we may riſe to the reſurrection of life, and triumph and rejoice amongſt glorious angels to all eternity: Which the Lord of his mercy grant. *Amen.*

The End of the Seventh SERMON.

FINIS.